Susan Scheinberg
Robert Fitzgerald's *Aeneid*

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William Ruckelshaus's EDB

THE AMERICAN SPECTATOR®

VOL. 17 JUNE 1984 NO. 6

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by Owen Harries

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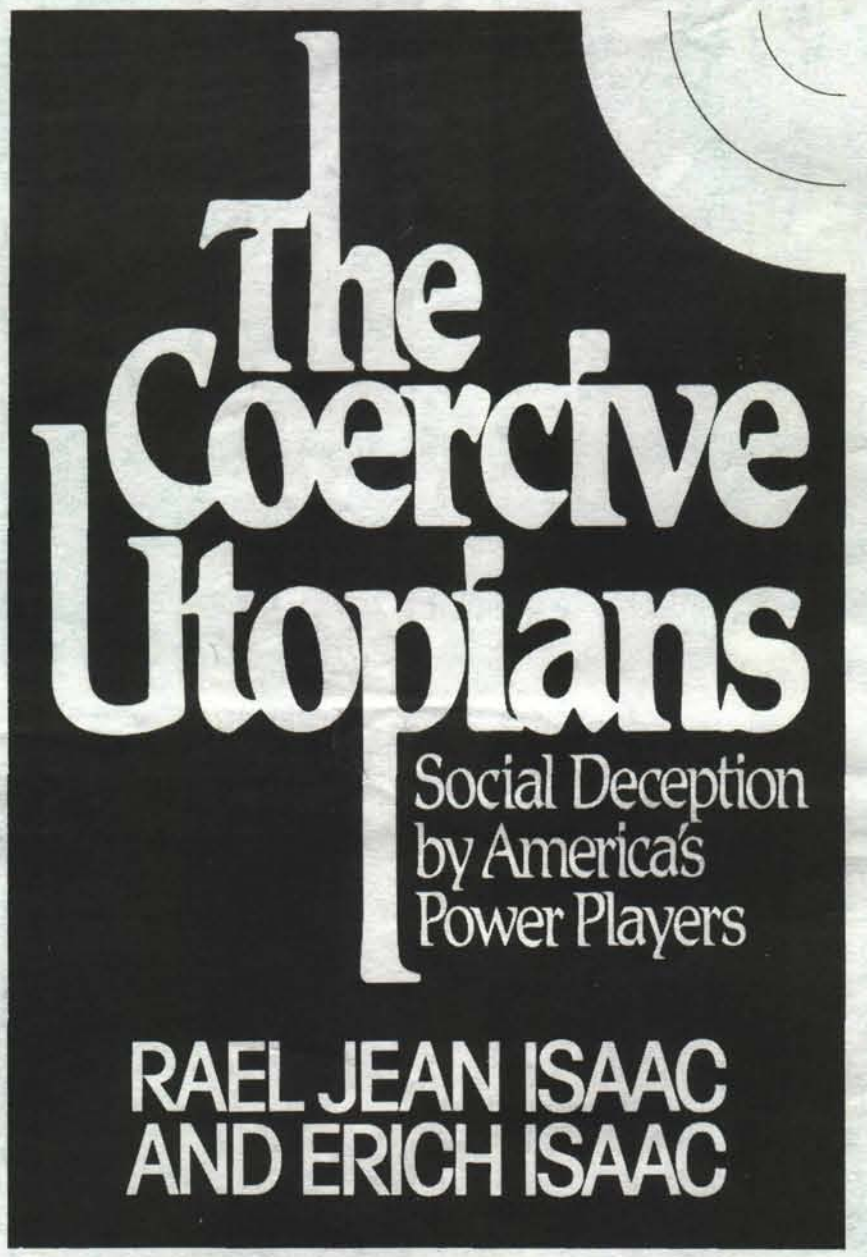

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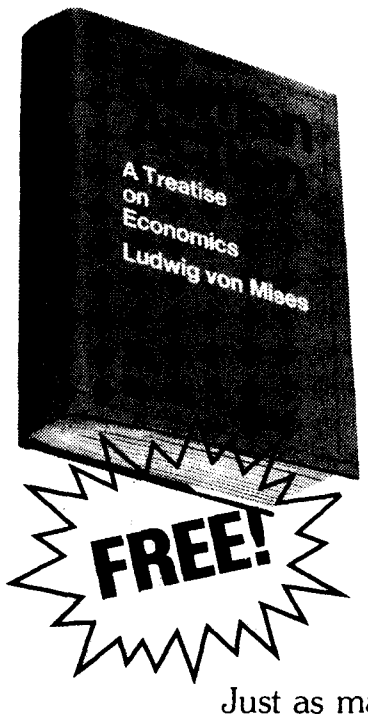

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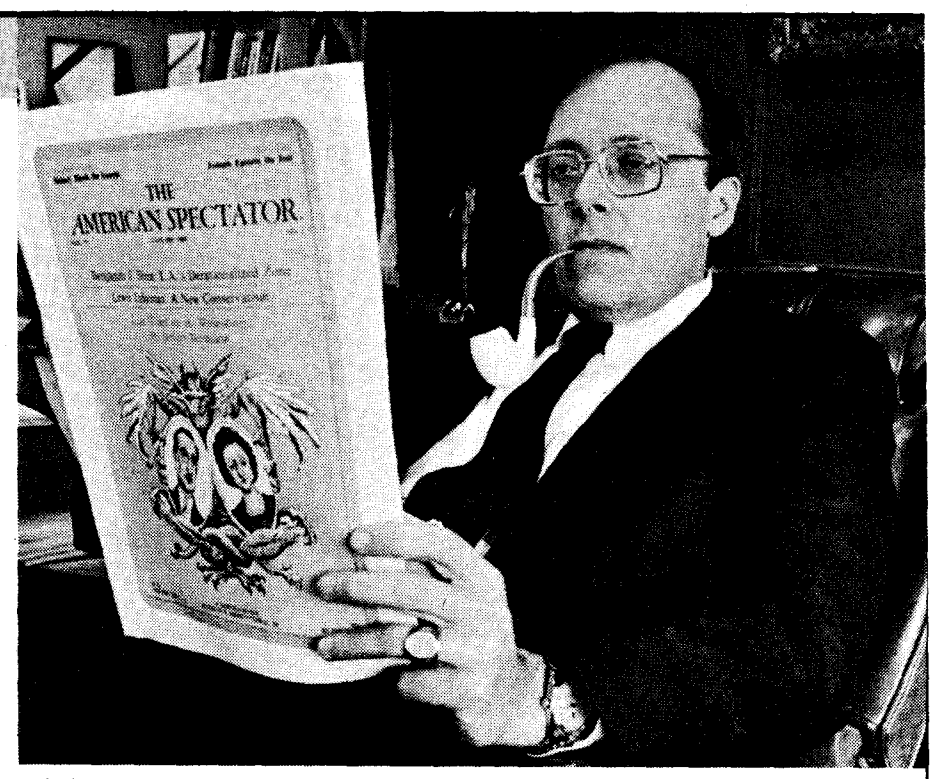

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Cover drawing by Elliott Banfield

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THE CONTINUING CRISIS

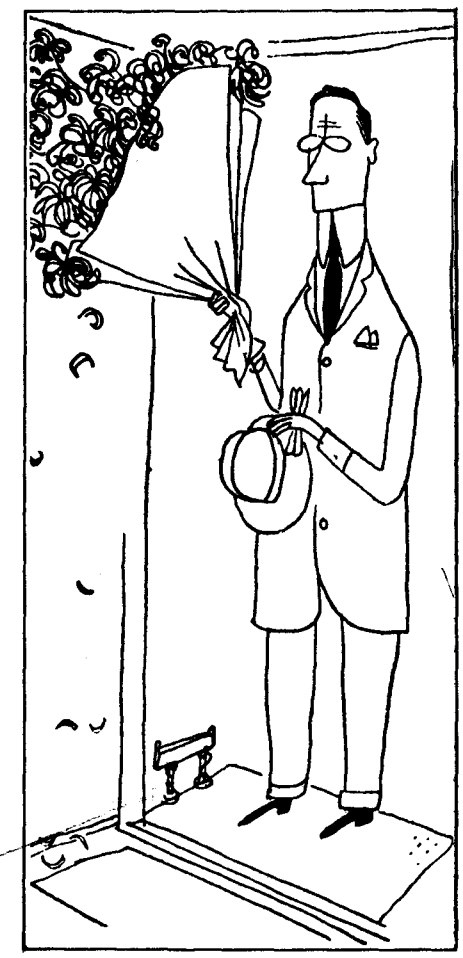
•On April 1 those two palefaces and that one Afro-American still in the running for the Democratic presidential nomination made a joint appearance in Manhattan and pledged mutual respect. It was April Fools' Day, and within minutes of their solemn declarations they were again bickering infantilely, as all the pundits noted. What remains unnoted is that these three enlightened progressives are running in the most racially divisive presidential campaign in many a moon. How is it that almost thirty years after *Brown* v. *Board of Education* race probably looms larger in presidential politics than ever before, and in the party that prides itself on being the party of conscience and liberation? Somewhere along the way the noble goal became the useful humbuggery, and now the humbugs have turned on each other.

•Nonetheless on April 3 the old-fashioned sycophancy of former Vice President Walter Mondale prevailed over Senator Gary Hartpence's occult agitations and the Holy Man Jackson's rants. He triumphed in New York's Democratic presidential primary, and seven days later in Pennsylvania a similar gasp from *vox populi* made him once again the Democratic frontrunner, despite his insistence that he remained a mere Joan of Arc. In California, controversy continued throughout the month over the unusual official portrait that artist Don Bachardy daubed of former Governor Jerry Brown. Conventional critics found it rude, insisting that it be hung without the fabulous pageantry that California's high and mighty customarily accord such occasions and in isolation from other gubernatorial mugs; but the Hon. Brown is convinced that the portrait is quality stuff, and he has assured his loyal followers who still mill about in the state's numerous health-food stores and drug rehabilitation centers that the painting is "a brilliant piece of work (which) reflects the period in which we live. As an historical artifact, it will be of enormous value to future generations." Actually Mr. Bachardy's series of smudges looks like a gigantic pap smear. In Toledo, Ohio, Miss Vicky Downey's pet rat, Yentl, saved her from death on a burning mattress when it clambered aboard her nose and licked her from a deep sleep, and the Hon. Frank Church is dead.

•In progressive Stockton, California, the New Age Liberal logicians were presented with an awesome problem when former councilman Mr. Ralph White, who is black, challenged City Councilman Mark Stebbins's claims to negritude. Mr. Stebbins admits that he once believed himself to be white and that his grandparents, parents, and siblings have all been white; but he insists that he is black, and the president of Stockton's venerable California Black American Political Association backs him up. Now fifteen years after the New Age Liberals began arguing that women are the same as men and that the rich are the same as the poor and that the United States has much in common with the Soviet Union, how can they ever disprove Mr. Stebbins's assertion? Where is the evidence that he is not a black? Ill fortune continues to stalk Miss Ann Seepo, the 73-year-old megalomaniac, who failed again last month to end it all by leaping in front of an oncoming New York City subway. It was her second botched attempt in three years, and this time she came away in better shape than some of the badly shaken passengers. Miss Seepo was again of the false opinion that her landlord had glorified her by evicting her from her apartment of forty years. Actually her landlord had no intention of turning the pest into a media hero, and after a checkup she was sent on her way home free to try once more.

•For the women of the fevered brow April was a gruesome month. Miss Germaine Greer's new book, *Sex and Destiny,* arrived at the bookstores arguing that a lady's vagina can be extremely useful and entertaining. Moreover it differs markedly from the male member. Thus Miss Greer has joined the Prophetess Betty Friedan in a growing movement of feminist revisionism, which might yet return Aphrodite and Doris Day to their rightful places at the center of gringo society. The Rhode Island Supreme Court voided Mr. Claus von Bülow's uxoricide conviction, creating a climate of fear amongst the handful of feminists who remain undivorced; and a spirit of rebellion filled the authorities in Orlando, Florida over a warning they received from the federal government. Apparently a feminist working covertly reported to Washington that these Confederates have been hoisting up "sex-designated road signs" such as "Flag Man Ahead" and "Men Working." It could be Fort Sumter all over again.

•Feminist fortunes were no better off in the Bronx where one of the Republic's rare ex-lady cops, Mrs. Sheila Ryan DeLuca, was found guilty of murder for killing a rookie fireman, Mr. Robert Bisset, despite Mrs. DeLuca's sworn testimony that the rogue had been foolhardy enough to have sex with her, albeit after preliminary doses of drugs and alcohol. Finally, the Episcopal Church administered a frightening blow to lady theologians when a 4-foot, 250-pound crucifix depicting Jesus as a woman was ordered removed from New York City's St. John the Divine, though the statue featured two stupendous breasts and though the Bishop behind the banishment insisted that he was all for feminism and even for "enhancing" the symbols of Jesus by depicting him as a colored person or a Swede. Yet the bebosomed Jesus went too far, according to Bishop Walter D. Dennis. On the other hand, Prof. Phyllis Trible of the Union Theological



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Seminary insisted that a female crucifixion figure "does not deny the male Jesus of history" but simply lets the gals in on "Christ's mystical body." The cathedral's dean tried to propitiate the feminists by reminding them that the Church had gone through similar arguments before agreeing to the ordination of women. "I don't see anything really new here," said Very Rev. James Parks Morton, in words that pretty much expressed the views of the Republic's most thoughtful atheists and agnostics who marked these wizards down years ago as morons.

•The Commerce Department reported that the economy grew at 8.3 percent in the first quarter, 3.3 percent more than in the last quarter of 1983. After 400 years Mr. Francisco Pizarro, the explorer, got it together again thanks to an American anthropologist, who for $4000 went to Peru and attached Mr. Pizarro's recently discovered skull to his skeleton. On April 26, radical-feminist-idealist Miss Kathy Boudin astounded officials and spectators in a White Plains, New York courtroom by telling the truth. She pleaded guilty to murder and robbery charges, saying her life had been committed to political principles and "I can be true to those principles without engaging in violent acts." On that she will now get plenty of government assistance, for the court sentenced this exemplary representative of the nation's "brightest generation ever" to a minimum of 20 years in the hoosegow. Anti-Qaddafi demonstrators outside the Libyan embassy in London were fired upon by a gunperson from within the embassy. This typically Libyan counter-demonstration was followed by a frightening mobilization of armed British police, which the Libyan government was quick to identify as "racist harassment" and neocolonialism at its worst. When their London diplomats were given a police escort from the country, the Libyans became even madder.

•At Princeton University, the forces of progress and liberality are mounting yet another attempt to bar *Prospect* magazine, the off-campus conservative journal, from the dormitories of Princeton's young. In Ulm, West Germany, scientists have developed a thimble-scale milking machine for milking mice, and evidence mounts that at least part of what the Liberals call the Kennedy Legacy is a growing slum around Ethel Kennedy's estate in McLean, Virginia. According to a new book, written by David Horowitz and Peter Collier, this rising generation of Kennedys rises not only because of Kennedy money but also because of cocaine, hashish, LSD, and numerous other New Age health foods. Loyal Kennedy servitors have reputedly fanned out to scotch the book, *The Kennedys: An American Drama*, but David Kennedy's wretched expiry on April 25 is going to make their work the most difficult act of Kennedy magic yet.

—RET

CORRESPONDENCE

Verifying the Lie

With great interest I read the summary article by Edith Efron regarding the Great Cancer Scare ("The Big Cancer Lie," *TAS*, March 1984). I have considerable familiarity with the asbestos component of that scare and I find that her data and conclusions check very well with my personal knowledge. I suspect, however, that the situation may actually be worse than she has indicated.

The use of science by the federal government for political purposes of any hue is, I feel, not only unethical but should be absolutely illegal. Scientific data is the factual base for any significant activities in such areas as health, agriculture, and the environment. Unfortunately, I feel that all three have been so politicized by leftists that sensible policies and actions vary from difficult to impossible.

—James R. Dunn, Chairman
Dunn Geoscience Corp.
Latham, New York

Curia Bashing

I had complete empathy as I read William McGurn's "The Befuddlement of American Catholicism" (*TAS*, March 1984). It reminded me of what my father said at one time, "Now there's a smart man; he says exactly what I've been saying all along."

Only, I have in mind the "curia" of each of several mainline churches of the Reformation. Strangely enough, I have often felt that they are, as McGurn says about his church leaders, ". . . lusting for the sort of prestige and authority enjoyed by their predecessors . . ." when they were known as "Der Herr Pastor."

—Alfred O. Hahn
Glen Falls, New York

Thank you for the finely attuned article by William McGurn. . . . Certainly the Pope must know what is going on here, but why hasn't he acted to rectify the rectories?

Perhaps he realizes that the American Bishops might just break with Rome, and form a de jure "American Catholic Church" out of what is now only a de facto one. This new church would be able to point to the Anglicans as an example, and could take almost all of the American Catholic population with them, and away from the Vicar of Christ, the Pope, in due time. A U.S. Archbishops' Synod would likely run the whole show from on high. This has a good chance of occurring unless something drastic happens soon. Presently, U.S. Bishops go to Rome, get lectured or warned by His Holiness, and return here unfazed, going right on with what they were doing before the trip. Some even dare suggest that the Pope didn't mean what he told them, or shouldn't be taken seriously because he fails to appreciate the specially unique position of us Americans. . . .

But what of the Pope? . . . Well, he could start by calling one or a select few of the lower ranking U.S. Bishops to the Vatican to be reprimanded or suspended from their duties in their Sees. . . . The Pope should take such action now while his authority still carries great weight with the vast mass of faithful parishioners. If he waits much longer, the U.S. Bishops will probably succeed in undermining his perceived authority, and his sanctions, if ever imposed, would only justify their schism.

I am optimistic that groups such as Catholics United for Faith (CUF), the St. Thomas More Educational Foundation, the National Committee of Catholic Laity (NCCL), Fidelity Forum, and Keep the Faith will accurately inform the Pope of this crisis in the American branch of Roman Catholicism. . . .

—Jeffrey R. Portko
Grand Rapids, Michigan

Figuring *The Big Chill*

Thank you for Yale and Rita Kramer's essay on *The Big Chill* ("The Narcissist Generation Hits the Screen," *TAS*, April 1984).

Many of those who grew up during that "era" thought they were building a monument that would endure. In the final analysis, however, that monument was only to themselves and their pretensions. Now, as this movie shows, as Shelley put it so well in *Ozymandias*, ". . . Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare the lone and level sands stretch far away." Pity some are still trudging that wasteland.

—Daniel R. Kronemyer
San Diego, California

The best movie review I have read in years. Kramer and Kramer should keep on writing. They crack me up.

—K.M. Cosgrove, M.D.
Bronx, New York

I liked the Kramers' review of *The Big Chill* immensely, but I could not wholly agree with it.

It is indeed true that *Chill* demands audience acceptance of a number of implausibilities. Besides the ones that bother the Kramers, there are several others that bother me. One is the apparent dearth of paid household help in a large house occupied by two rich adults with two young children and two demanding careers.

Another is the rah-rah spirit elicited from these former radicals by a televised football game involving their alma mater. In my college days, no self-respecting "radical" would be caught dead cheering his college team. If this were meant to be one of the changes brought by the years to the *Chill* people, surely Nick would make a sardonic comment, and surely the group ritual of watching the game would lose its bonding potential.

Nick himself represents the greatest implausibility of all. How did he get himself drafted? Again, no self-respecting "radical" would have subjected himself to such indignity.

And so the awareness dawns—that, regrettably, *The Big Chill* was meant to be all things to all people of a certain generation. There are scenes and characters to appeal to the nostalgia of the erstwhile flower children; there are scenes and characters to appeal to the nostalgic impulses of the "straights" as well.

Does *Chill* succeed in its goal of being all things to all people? Well, not to the *Spectator*'s crusty critics from

(continued on page 47)

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EDITORIALS

CONGRESSIONAL MINESWEEPERS

by R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr.

How very much like our 535 U.S. congressmen and senators are those sadly unappreciated mines now floating in Puerto Corinto, Puerto Sandino, and El Bluff off progressive Nicaragua; and how curious it is that so many of these 535 Machiavels now rail against them. These are mines whose only talent is to let off shocking *fortissimos* of noise. They do not sink ships. They hardly damage them. All they do is fulminate, and yet last month they were the object of indignant yells from congressmen and senators many of whom are themselves mere fulminators.

Our loud and theatrical congressmen cannot effect a balanced budget. They cannot cut the deficit. They cannot stop the spread of unfriendly Marxist regimes in Central America. All they can do is go kaboom when they brush up against a genuine question of American national interest much as our mines merely go kaboom when they brush up against a ship laden with arms to strengthen Nicaragua's anti-American regime or El Salvador's anti-American rebels.

Adapted from RET's weekly Washington Post *column syndicated by King Features.*

These mines, of course, destroy themselves during their great and glorious outbursts, and it is not unthinkable that our noisy Machiavels are destroying themselves too. The American electorate is not going to be pleased when faced with the increased danger of Central American bases abounding in Soviet missiles, guerrilla fighters, and terrorists.

In Central America there is a growing threat to American security. Very few interested observers remain in doubt as to this. According to the bipartisan Kissinger Commission report, "The commission encountered no leader in Central America, including democratic and unarmed Costa Rica, who did not express deep foreboding about the impact of a militarized, totalitarian Nicaragua on the peace and security of the region." To be ignorant of this danger one has to be a left-wing ideologue or a self-righteous inhabitant of Capitol Hill.

Of course all those who voted last month against our involvement in mining Nicaraguan ports solemnly claim that they will not allow another Cuba in Central America. Sen. Christopher Dodd said it himself on April 27, 1983, when in delivering the Democrats' response he proclaimed, "We will oppose the establishment of Marxist states in Central America." Well, on what grounds can he and his colleagues make good on his promises? If, as they say, international law proscribes us from assisting the Nicaraguan freedom fighters in mining Nicaraguan ports what sacred passage in international law will allow them to "oppose the establishment of Marxist states in Central America"? Furthermore how are they going to "oppose" the establishment of these states, by exploding in oratory on Capitol Hill?

On ABC's "This Week With David Brinkley," Sen. Patrick Leahy, D-Vt., went so far as to say that were Nicaragua to allow the implacement of Soviet missile sites, "We would have the opportunity, in fact the right, to go in and remove that." Well, if international law bars us from stopping hostile shipping into Nicaragua how will Sen. Leahy justify the immensely more costly and dangerous task of removing missile sites, Soviet missile sites?

Come that grim day when the Soviets do in Nicaragua what they have done in Cuba, the Machiavels of Capitol Hill will lose themselves again in oratory and pettifoggery. That is all. The fact is they do not want to do anything about the growing danger in our hemisphere. They lack the pluck. They believe in what we might call the enduring present, a present that finds them very comfortable and unbothered about tomorrow.

Thus, there is farce. In Central America others fight our battles. On Capitol Hill the orators thunder against the CIA, as though it were our enemy. Last month as money ran out for those Nicaraguan freedom fighters who might bring to their country the peace our troops brought to Grenada, the Capitol Hill Machiavels indulged their appetite for noise and theater by pursuing the vexed procedural question of who in the CIA had told whom in Congress about what and in how many sentences. Sen. Daniel Moynihan said the CIA vouchsafed him but one, and so he threatened to resign as vice chairman of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence. How many sentences would have prevented this calamity, and how many words per sentence, the Senator did not divulge. Meanwhile the wars in Central America spread. □

DEATH THREAT DEMOCRATS

In appraising the singular candidacy of Jesse Jackson, the liberal brethren have a fundamental problem. Their views on race are incoherent. They have told us that race is not to be an issue in how Americans make their decisions, particularly their political decisions. Nonetheless, they have fallen in with some of those who do make decisions along these lines, particularly those blacks who do.

Washington Post columnist Haynes Johnson exhibited this schizophrenic habit of mind very recently in a column whose purpose was to chastise Jackson for his recent moral equivocations. Johnson begins by scoffing at our society's propensity for "group-think" or "dumb-think" as he also puts it; and among other examples he cites the reaction of the Portuguese community of New Bedford, Mass., wherein the Portuguese interpreted the indictment of six and the conviction of four local Portuguese on rape-related charges as an instance of anti-Portuguese bigotry.

A few paragraphs later he himself falls into dumb-think. In a rosy appraisal of Jackson's candidacy he speaks auspiciously of Jackson's "potential" for "forging a new political coalition composed of minority voters, Hispanics and Orientals as well as blacks, along with other low-income, working-class people of all races and both sexes."

Those who are familiar with income distribution in America know that as

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a rule Orientals are not "low-income" people. Moreover in political terms what do the growing number of professionals who are Hispanic, black, or Oriental have in common with low-income Hispanics, blacks, and Orientals, aside from blood? The answer is very little, and to say that they do have much in common is to insist on racial politics—that is to say deciding political issues on the basis of race.

Is that good? I think not. Wherever such a primitive political value exists there is violence, and, as the liberals so often tell us, injustice. All of which is to say that when race becomes a political value democratic process is threatened. That is the deepest problem with the arrival of Black Muslim Louis Farrakhan upon the American political scene. He is not in sympathy with the spirit of the democratic process. He views those who do not approve of Jesse Jackson's candidacy as people bent on Jackson's "destruction." He makes threats against them and against reporters who report stories that he does not approve of, notwithstanding the fact that the reports are true.

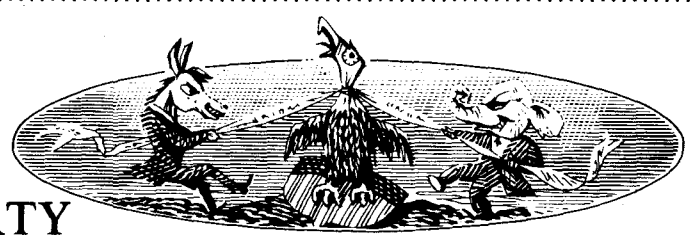
Among other things the democratic process demands that we live peacefully with our disappointments, and Farrakhan appears to be decidedly unpeaceful. By bringing Farrakhan along in his political entourage Jesse Jackson has introduced two new elements into presidential politics, open racialism and the death threat. Moreover I do not believe that any presidential contender in this century has had a man so close to him who speaks as violently as Farrakhan.

To the black reporter responsible for passing on the report that Jackson applied ethnic slurs to Jews, Farrakhan warned in a March 11 radio broadcast, "One day soon we will punish you with death." More recently he harangued "white America," saying in a 90-minute diatribe, "Everything we have we have offered it to you, and the reward we get is the destruction of our heroes . . . You no longer are our judge. God now is making us the judge." This is pretty incendiary stuff. To find its equivalent issuing from a white politician you would have to go quite beyond the early George Wallace to some Ku Kluxian on the march in the 1920s.

Last month on the "CBS Morning News," Jackson and three distinguished blacks discussed the whole imbroglio with Diane Sawyer. All four displayed an insouciance that was quite appalling. Jackson refused to disavow Farrakhan's support and spoke sanctimoniously about Farrakhan's "redemption." In the ensuing conversation with the other blacks, one of whom was Andy Young, it was explained that Jackson was performing a valuable service by bringing Farrakhan into the political process and that the black reporter responsible for exposing Jackson's ethnic slurs acted improperly for the slurs were off the record.

The truth is that Jackson is endangering the democratic process by bringing into it a man who utters death threats. Furthermore, there are enormities that a reporter is duty-bound to put on the record, for instance: ethnic slurs. Ask former Secretary of Agriculture Earl Butz. It is time our liberals see this campaign for what it is, to wit: one that has lowered our democratic standards to a dangerous level. □

CAPITOL IDEAS



THOUGHTS ON POVERTY

by Tom Bethell

"Poverty is the problem, not Communism."
—Gary Hart, presidential campaign 1984

"Many liberals and conservatives argue that the real enemy in Central America is poverty, not Communism."
—*Time* magazine, April 23, 1984

We had better learn how to respond to this latest specimen of cant because we are going to hear it repeated a few thousand times before the November election. By the way, *Time*'s evidence that "conservatives" think such pusillanimous thoughts appears to be nothing more than the next sentence in the *Time* article, reading: "The bipartisan Kissinger commission recommended an economic aid program along the lines of the Marshall Plan . . ." Well I suppose some people might say that Kissinger is a conservative. I understand that President Reagan's butler, called Deaver, is also sometimes called a conservative.

Communism causes poverty—let us get that straight at the outset. All Communist countries are impoverished, and the more strictly the edicts of the central planners are enforced, the greater will be the impoverishment. Communism fails an empirical test, whatever one thinks of the theory underlying it. It has never been known to succeed anywhere except in small communities with voluntary membership. Moreover, it is easy to demonstrate why in principle it cannot succeed in mobilizing production. This has been explained in detail by an Austrian economist named Von Mises and I won't bore you with the details. The basic problem is that organizing production from a central post is too complicated and posits a form of human nature that does not correspond to reality. If, on the other hand, decision-making is decentralized, then you no longer have Communism. Fully decentralized decision-making, with the government confining itself to the neutral role of umpire, merely enforcing the agreements between decision-makers, is another way of describing private property. That is the system of production that America opted for in the late eighteenth century.

Of course, liberals don't think along these lines at all. To the extent that they do think about the matter, they probably think of Communism as a response to poverty—a kind of retribution. (That is the true meaning of the phrase "social justice," by the way—revenge.) Does poverty *have* a cause, then? If you were to ask your average college or garden liberal this, he most likely would be perplexed, because for him "poverty" is not so much a state to be explained as it is a stimulus to which he is expected to respond appropriately—perhaps with some phrase including the word "compassionate." (I am talking about liberals, now, not leftists, who indeed would have an answer albeit a wrong one. For example, they would say that poverty was caused by "oppression," or by "U.S. imperialism," or by "multinational corporations.")

A liberal, in fact, may be defined as someone whose mental state is one of deference to the unwritten rules of sociopolitical etiquette. At a dinner party he doesn't want to say the wrong thing, any more than he wants to use the wrong fork or arrive wearing the wrong clothes. If for instance he hears someone at the other end of the table

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say "Communism," he knows that it is perfectly safe to respond, "Is not the problem; poverty is the problem." Anything else might get him into trouble, or at least cause eyebrow raising, and that is what he wants to avoid more than anything. So he follows etiquette, which means following the example of others. Did someone say "bed"? A good response would be: "We should not look for Reds under them." As a coda a good liberal might then add: "What people do in them is their own business." (I am indebted to my friend Joe Sobran for that little aperçu!) The point is, no thought is needed. You pick up the right responses in college, and by reading the newspapers—the "style" section especially. The Left has *established* our sociopolitical etiquette. Liberals merely obey it.

Imagine if someone were to ask you, "Why is the Sahara a desert?" You too would be flummoxed. "Because it has no rainfall," you might feebly respond. Yes, but why doesn't it rain in that part of the world? You might have some dim recollection of a global weather map covered with arrows. You might even try to make some lame reference to "trade winds."

Now you know how the liberal feels when he is asked about the causes of poverty. He hasn't really given the matter any thought, and the reason is not that he is stupid but that he already has too many things to think about—wife, kids, mortgage, school fees, and next week's business trip—and he just wants to get through the day without making too many sociopolitical "gaffes" (to use a favorite Hive word). If he does at some point in his life have the luxury of thinking about the cause of poverty in foreign lands—if, for example, he lands a job as a college prof or finds a berth in a think tank—then he will certainly move either to the right or to the left. But he won't remain a liberal because that is simply the position of someone who wishes to be in conformity with the fashionable consensus without devoting any thought to the matter.

In many ways, you cannot really blame liberals for this. In fact, according to my definition we are almost all liberals with respect to one issue or another. (That is, we don't even pretend to ourselves that we know anything about the subject; we just mouth the cliché that seems most likely to keep us out of trouble should the topic arise.) Also, the liberal is not alone. Most development economists —I would estimate 50 percent of those employed by the World Bank and by the International Monetary Fund—think that poverty is caused by a shortage of money. Money stands in the same relationship to poverty as rain does to deserts. And just as irrigation can "cure" a desert, so foreign aid can cure poverty. That, I regret to say, is still state-of-the-art thinking at the multilateral aid institutions. The liberal may sense that there is something wrong with that analysis but he knows that he doesn't know enough to argue and, as I say, he has more mundane matters to worry about. (I claim to speak with authority about liberals because I was one myself not too many years ago. And looking back on my mental state then, I can now see that it was non-thought that characterized my attitude much more than wrong-thought.)

If you do begin to think about poverty, one of the first conclusions you must come to is that it was universal until the Industrial Revolution; that is, until the notion of property rights became incorporated into the rule of law. (It was only gradually, and primarily in England at first, that government accepted the idea that it should be umpire rather than team-player. The great struggle of American leftists today is to get the government out of its umpire role and onto the team of play, taking one side against the other.)

Today, we seem to think of poverty

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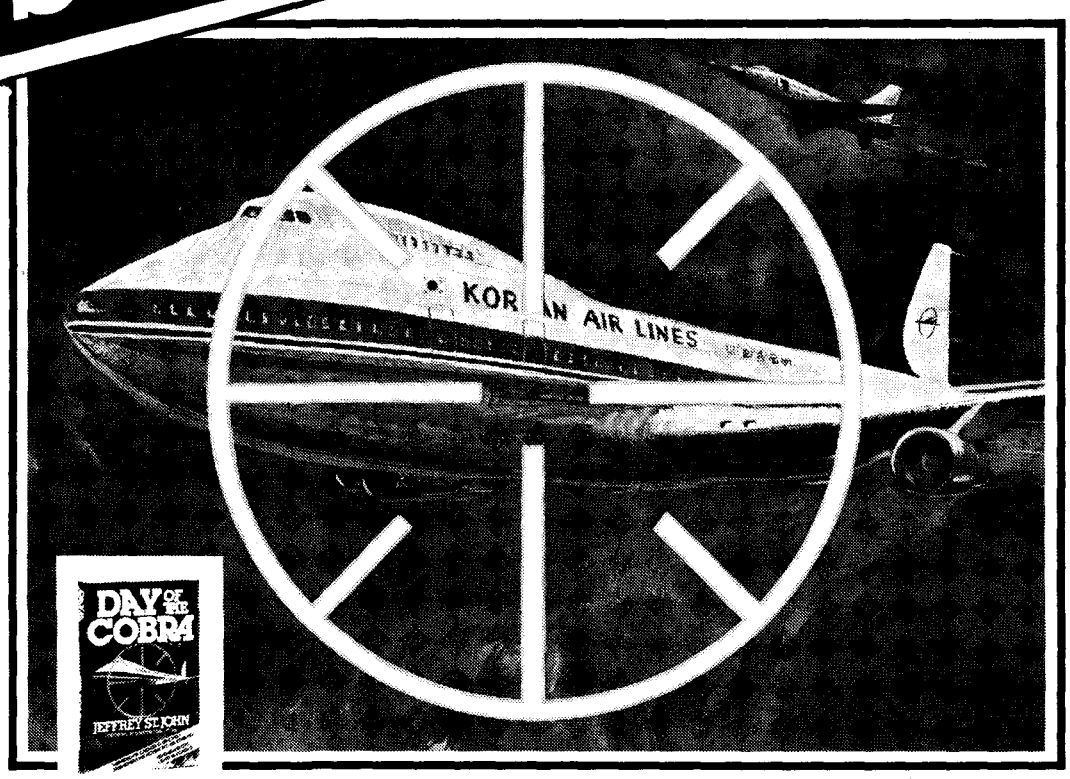

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only in relative terms. An American family of four earning less than $9860 is "below the poverty line," but we do not think of a New Guinea tribe as being even further below the poverty line, because we think of the New Guinea tribesman in absolute, not relative, terms. As such it strikes me that those who cry "poverty" are in fact giving vent to envy. They seek to *arouse* envy, and thus bring down the vengeful wrath of Communism upon the heads of those whose material circumstances of life improve more rapidly than those of their fellow citizens.

"Poverty" seems only to be noticeable when some are rising out of it. Charles Dickens noticed poverty in nineteenth-century England, when absolute poverty was diminishing more rapidly than at any earlier period of British history. Likewise, Americans noticed "poverty" in Latin American countries once they began to climb out of it but not before. Marxism, the ideology of revenge, depended on the increasing prosperity of industrialized Europe to attract its adherents. It may be said that poverty is detected and deplored in inverse proportion to the number of people who experience it. Certainly we hear nothing at all in the news media about the poverty in Communist countries, despite the very conspicuous existence of a privileged class of rulers in all such countries.

The one thing that can be said for certain is that if certain U.S.-supported policies in Latin America are allowed to continue unabated, then poverty will actually increase and Communism will no doubt prevail. I am thinking in particular of the "land reform" program in El Salvador—an assault on property rights in the guise of an expansion of them. Land was seized from one group of citizens—against whom there had been no showing of wrongdoing—and then allegedly "given" to another group—the tenants. But in fact the new "owners" cannot sell this land (for 30 years). This has had a devastating effect on the El Salvador economy. The expropriated class has received no recompense, and the new owners can enjoy no sense of predictability about the future: If the government could assume the power to seize property from one group of citizens, what is to stop it from doing the same thing again? Confidence about the future is eroded, and so the disciplines of saving and effort, which are essential if material prosperity is to increase, are undermined: Why save for the future if you don't know what power (and savings) the government is going to seize in the future?

Grace Goodell, the Harvard-based anthropologist who has done field research in land reform, told me that the Shah of Iran destabilized his own country with land reform in the 1960s. She interviewed peasants who had been "given" land and they would say to her: "If the Shah has the power to take this land from the most powerful people in the country, think what he could do to us." It's a pretty good bet that the Shah wouldn't have imposed such a cockeyed system of revenge upon his own country without outside advice—almost certainly American. I do know that Americans advised President Thieu to implement land reform in South Vietnam in 1970. Once again, land was taken from one group of citizens and "given" to another, who in this instance were not allowed to sell it for 15 years. Well, it didn't take the Communists that long to take over. Thieu destabilized his own country with land reform.

The lesson seems to be that countries are particularly exposed to the danger of Communism at the time when they are most rapidly, and therefore most conspicuously, moving out of poverty. For that is the time when feelings of envy, and the thirst for vengeance against the productive, are at their most virulent. □

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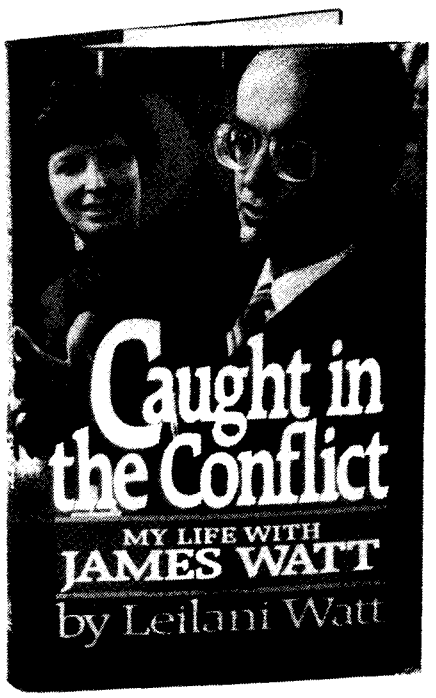

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Owen Harries

CONSERVATIVE CRITICS OF NATO

Henry Kissinger, Irving Kristol, and Norman Podhoretz have pronounced on the crisis in the Western alliance. But is this enough to get Europe to take the matter seriously?

There have been two broad reactions to the current crisis in NATO. One is that there is no crisis. The proponents of this view, a mixed bag which includes, among others, Lord Carrington (the new Secretary General of NATO), Willy Brandt, Couve de Murville, and, to descend a little, Hodding Carter, maintain that what we are experiencing is merely the latest instance of the somewhat heightened level of friction that inevitably occurs from time to time in a large alliance. In Hodding Carter's words, the concern and recrimination expressed on both sides of the Atlantic are simply "a repeat of a play witnessed many times before." The conclusion of this group is that we should be more relaxed about NATO, that it is basically in good shape, and that a little good will and good sense can sort out what problems exist.

The second view is that the current crisis is not only real but of a different order of gravity from earlier periods of tension. The future of the alliance is now in jeopardy and the whole enterprise is likely to unravel unless far-reaching and urgent measures are taken to deal with the crisis. This view has been put forcefully by a number of American conservatives, including Henry Kissinger, Irving Kristol, and Norman Podhoretz.

As between the two assessments there is really no contest. The first is so at variance with the facts, so determined not to acknowledge obvious basic changes affecting the very foundations of the alliance, that one must assume it is usually advanced for political reasons. This assumption is supported by the fact that no one holding office in any NATO country publicly recognizes anything as serious as a crisis.

One can understand the reasoning: Recognizing a crisis would involve, at a minimum, resolving to do something about it, and, at worst, could contribute to a further deterioration by undermining the established habits of thought and behavior which are by now the alliance's principal asset. On the other hand, little can be done to resolve the crisis until it is recognized, and recognized publicly.

Kissinger, Kristol, and Podhoretz essentially agree about the nature of the problem. Commitment to the alliance and a clear sense of its fundamental purpose have declined seriously and are continuing to do so. As the military balance between the United States and the Soviet Union has shifted in favor of the latter, NATO no longer has a credible strategic doctrine. There is increasing opposition within the alliance, and particularly in its European component, both to dependence on nuclear weapons and to significant increases in conventional military strength. Anti-Americanism, neutralism, and pacifism are rampant in Europe and are spreading out beyond radical and student circles to infect the attitudes of governments, potential governments, and the people at large. American leadership has been poor in recent years and is increasingly resented and mistrusted. European political, trade, and financial links with the Soviet Union have grown substantially in the last decade. American and European assessments of Soviet aims and behavior diverge increasingly. So, too, do their views on strategic issues outside the NATO area.

In other words, all three of the relationships which are fundamental to the alliance—those between the U.S. and the Soviet Union, between the U.S. and its European allies, and between the Europeans and the Soviet Union—have changed profoundly in recent years, and changed in ways which undermine the integrity of NATO.

There is also agreement among Kissinger, Kristol, and Podhoretz that, as those without responsibility must be expected to behave irresponsibly, it is vital that Europe be made to assume greater control of its own defense. But beyond that—and specifically on how that objective is to be achieved—their views diverge.

Kristol, taking the most radical position, opts for the conversion of NATO into an all-European affair. The United States should leave the alliance and withdraw all its ground troops from Europe. The Europeans would then be in complete charge of the defense of Europe, free to adopt whatever military and political strategy they chose for that purpose. If they were to desire it, and if agreement could be reached on terms, the U.S. should be prepared to form a separate alliance with this new European NATO. The U.S. also should be prepared to provide the Europeans with tactical, intermediate-range, and long-range nuclear weapons, but only on request. For its part, America should accept a doctrine of "no first use" of nuclear weapons, as dependence on those weapons as a first resort no longer makes strategic sense and it (rightly) scares the wits out of the Europeans. It is well within the means of the Europeans to make it unnecessary by providing themselves with adequate conventional defense forces.

While being as unhappy as Kristol about the state of NATO, and perhaps even more hostile to prevailing European attitudes, Podhoretz rejects these proposals on three grounds: First, their implementation would in all probability lead to the collapse of Europe's will and to its subsequent Finlandization;

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second, they would very likely result in an American retreat to isolationism; and third, the cost of an adequate conventional defense is politically and economically prohibitive and it is unrealistic to expect that the Europeans could or would bear it.

Kristol has his answers to each of these objections. To the first, which amounts to the familiar argument that while the operation might well succeed the patient would probably die, he responds, in effect, that as things are the patient is dying anyway, so there is nothing to lose by taking the risk. Second, where Podhoretz stresses the danger of isolationism, Kristol sees the opportunity for America, no longer impeded by the debilitating entanglements of an enfeebled NATO, to engage in a purposeful unilateral globalism. And third, as far as the heavy expense of conventional defense is concerned, Kristol maintains that as the alliance clearly has the means available to meet this expense if it chooses to do so, and as dependence on nuclear weapons no longer makes sense, it would be clear evidence of political decadence if the challenge were not met. Further, if Europe *is* indeed decadent, there can be no political or moral case for committing American ground troops to its defense. That is, Kristol maintains that the very argument Podhoretz advances against an American withdrawal from Europe is, if accepted, in fact a compelling one in its favor.

The crucial difference between Kristol and Podhoretz turns on their reading of the respective pulses of America and Europe (they are of course virtually in full agreement about the principal adversary, the Soviet Union). Regarding the United States, Podhoretz is the more pessimistic. He does not believe that it is capable of sustaining a Realpolitik based on nothing more than national interest. It must either be bound to Europe and committed to a foreign policy with a high ideological content, or it will lapse into isolationism. Kristol, on the other hand, seems reasonably confident that America could pursue a policy based on national interest effectively.

As regards the European pulse, the situation is more complicated. In a sense Podhoretz's very deep pessimism, both about the strength of American isolationism and the risk involved in putting Europe to the test of responding positively to a severe shock, forces him to reach a conclusion more characteristic of the congenital optimist: i.e., that exhortation alone may keep NATO in business. His answer to the current predicament is to urge the "silent majority" of Europe to find its voice and to warn that if it does not America will have no choice but to walk the isolationist path. But, unlike the optimists, he gives the answer in anguish, without conviction and because, given the logic of his position, there is no other available. ("I am poignantly aware of how wan, how lacking in vitality, the case has become. But what else can one do?")

Conversely, while Kristol's conclusions are much more startling and bleak—withdraw from NATO, give up its basic strategic doctrine, pull out American ground troops—they are ultimately based on a more confident (though not a *very* confident) view of Europe (and America) than that held by Podhoretz. A direct confrontation with a hard choice just might bring Europe to its senses. It is the acceptance and rejection of this possibility, rather than a difference about the power of exhortation, that finally separate the two.

Little can be done to resolve the crisis until it is recognized, and recognized publicly.

Podhoretz and Kristol both write as engaged but independent intellectuals who clearly say what they mean. Kissinger tried to do the same a few years ago at Brussels, but the furor his talk created reminded him that, even if he was not currently employed by the American government, he was still in office—the office of being Henry Kissinger. He seems to have taken the experience to heart; either that or he is now in a state of serious uncertainty and confusion about NATO. In any event his recent piece on NATO in *Time* magazine is uncharacteristically tentative and muddled, with so much giving and taking away that it is difficult to know for certain what he is recommending.

Kissinger seems to start with a position not far removed from Kristol's (the need for a substantial Europeanization of NATO), but that position is soon overwhelmed by qualifications. The United States should give up the supreme military command of NATO—but it should keep the deputy position and moreover should take over that of Secretary General, responsible for the alliance's political machinery. (No urgency about this, however. It can wait until "the wise and thoughtful Carrington" is prepared to leave, which, given that he has just taken the job, is likely to be a fair while.) Europe should assume major responsibility for conventional ground defense and for arms control negotiations covering weapons on European soil—but the United States should maintain "considerable" ground forces in Europe, preserve and preferably strengthen existing U.S. land-based air power on the continent, continue its responsibility for both strategic and tactical nuclear defense, keep its intermediate-range missiles in Europe (subject to the wishes of the Europeans), and maintain its naval deployment unchanged.

By this time the sound of the deck chairs being rearranged is already distinctly audible. But things soon get worse, as Kissinger proceeds to scuttle his own proposal. After calling for a new group of "men and women known for their dedication to Western unity" to draw up a comprehensive design for NATO—an updated and unsexist version of the familiar "wise men" solution to alliance problems—he immediately proceeds to throw in his hand before a negotiating bid is made, by conceding that it is "extremely improbable" that they would agree to his proposals.

The real choice, Kissinger decides, would be between just muddling along with mere token changes and a commitment to full conventional defense on NATO's part. If Europe were prepared to opt for the latter course—and no reason is given as to why it would be willing to do so, having resisted the idea up to now—the U.S. should "accept the judgment that its present ground forces in Europe are an indispensible component" of such a defense. It is only in the event of the decision going the other way, with Europe deciding to condemn the alliance to permanent conventional inferiority, that the U.S. should begin the withdrawal of a substantial part ("perhaps up to half") of its present ground forces. If it should come to that, the withdrawal should be gradual. Indeed, in reality it might not really occur at all, for the "excess" forces might remain in Europe for an unspecified time "in a new status analogous to that of the French forces."

The status of the proposal to withdraw significant numbers of American ground troops from Europe is thus changed. Instead of a unilateral and unconditional decision on the part of the United States, required by American interests and aimed at forcing the Europeans to accept responsibilities (which is how Kristol sees it), it is reduced to a threatened "punishment" after the event, if they do not shape up. Even so, it is so heavily qualified and incremental in character as to be upsetting rather than compelling.

Kissinger ends his article by setting out three crucial political objectives for the alliance. It must equip itself with a grand strategy for both East-West and Third World problems; bipartisanship must be restored to U.S. foreign policy; and European governments must meet "head-on" the pacifistic and neutralist trends in their countries. He says nothing about how these objectives, which after all have long been recognized as crucial, are in fact to be achieved. It might be thought that a "solution" which requires the achieving of these three objectives is no solution at all, but merely a restatement of the problem.

All in all, this is not one of Kissinger's more impressive efforts. Throughout, he seems torn between the wish to change an unsatisfactory framework and concern to work within that framework, between asserting boldly what must be done to restore NATO and timidly limiting himself to what will be acceptable to the Europeans. In the end we are left with little more than a proposal to set up a group of "wise persons," a half-hearted warning to the possibility of troop withdrawal, and some high-class preaching.

No doubt Kissinger would defend himself by saying that these kinds of ambiguities and balancing acts are unavoidable in serious international politics. And it is probably true that Kissinger's status makes these ruminations, whatever their intellectual shortcomings, the most potent warning yet delivered to the Europeans about the way American opinion is moving.

Given the caliber and sophistication of Kissinger, Kristol, and Podhoretz, one of the most surprising features of their writings on the subject of NATO is the failure to consider seriously the politics of the alliance. And yet, surely, unless one has completely given up on NATO, that is the crux of the problem. As of now, and in fact for a number of years, the Europeans have come to take the American commitment so much for granted that they are more responsive to domestic political pressures and Soviet reactions to their behavior than they are to the views of the United States. Until this balance of concerns is changed, until circumstances are created that alter the terms by which the Europeans are obliged to calculate and compel them to give greater weight to American views, no amount of preaching, blandishments, or tinkering is likely to be effective in changing European behavior. What the Europeans need to be given are not more reassurances but

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conditions which require them to remember the fundamental terms of the alliance. It is in this sense that they most need to be made to assume "responsibility." Kristol evidently appreciates this, but believes that things cannot be altered without destroying NATO as it is now constituted—a form of political action, it is true, but one that should be considered as a last resort, after all others have been tried and have failed.

Two things have worked against serious American consideration of the politics of alliance in this sense. First, the U.S. was so dominant for so long, and could get its way so easily, that it was unnecessary to think about it. Second, the propagation of the view that NATO was not simply an ordinary alliance between nation states but represented a supranational and spiritual entity known as "the West" made it seem indecent to think in self-interested political terms. One does not want to be misunderstood: There is, of course, a sense in which "the West" does exist, but it does so as an entity characterized by certain shared values and traditions. It does not exist as a polity.

It is no doubt easier to draw attention to the importance of intra-alliance politics in a general way than it is to propose particular strategies which might effect the kinds of changes required in this instance. But one possibility immediately comes to mind, and that is the classic move of introducing new actors into the game to alter the existing balance of forces. An apposite example of this tactic is George Canning's famous "calling in the New World to redress the balance of the Old" in the 1820s, at a time when Britain was at odds with the other members of the Quadruple Alliance.

In that instance the United States was the new actor introduced; now America is in the British position of requiring new actors. The most obvious candidates are the countries of the Pacific, many of whom have exhibited impressive dynamism in recent years and among whom there is stirring a vague but persistent interest in the concept of a "Pacific Community." Part of the impulse behind this interest is the concern of some (not all) countries in the region to play a wider and more assertive role in international affairs, to make Pacific voices heard more clearly both in the region and beyond it.

The United States has interests in the Pacific which are extremely important in their own right and which should not simply be subordinated to other considerations. But this does not mean that they should not be thought of in relation to other things, and indeed such linkages are required of a global power worthy of the name. There are various steps open to the United States in the Pacific which would serve to remind Europeans that, if worst came to worst in NATO, the United States is not without options. These range from taking a more active, positive attitude toward the idea of a "Pacific Community," through stimulating the creation of social and economic institutions in the region (perhaps along OECD lines), to the setting up of mechanisms for political and strategic consultations on global issues with those countries in the regions that would be interested in participating. Any of these steps, perhaps combined with a deliberate and measured "benign neglect" of purely European preoccupations for a while, would be likely to focus the minds of Europeans wonderfully.

Interestingly, there is some evidence that such thinking may now have begun. A recent speech on the transatlantic relationship by Lawrence Eagleburger, Undersecretary of State for Political Affairs, began with a discussion not of the Atlantic and Europe but of the Pacific and Asia—innocently introduced in terms of demographic changes in the United States. And as this is being written a specially appointed ambassador is about to take off through Asia on the first of several trips to explore the Pacific Community concept more actively and at a higher level than previously.

Signals such as these already seem to be registering in Europe. In April, a large and well-publicized conference was held in Paris with the interesting title, "The Challenge of the Pacific: Western Hopes and Fears." At the conference sufficient concern was expressed by the European participants for Jeane Kirkpatrick to reassure them that Europe was not about to be displaced by the Pacific as the area of major U.S. foreign policy concern: a reassurance that might itself have caused thoughtful Europeans to ponder.

This use of what Liddel Hart used to call "the strategy of indirect approach" may point to a more effective way of reinvigorating NATO than concentrating directly on the mired issues of organization, force structures, and political attitudes in Europe. □

Gregory A. Fossedal

THE POLITICAL MARGIN OF 1984

Conservatives could win the presidency this year but lose the country.

Jerry P. James, an Oklahoma political activist, probably speaks for many Americans when he writes: "The single most important political event in 1984 is the reelection of our great President, Ronald Reagan." Between now and November, most of the media, much of the money, and a good share of the time of political volunteers will focus on the race for the Oval Office. Scattered attention will no doubt be given to a few governor's races, or aggregate changes in the Congress, e.g., whether the Republicans will gain or lose five seats in the House. But by and large, all eyes will be hypnotized by the supreme event, and that, it is assumed, is the White House sweepstakes.

This emphasis is probably misplaced, in several ways. As a reading of popular sentiment, Mr. Reagan's margin of victory—assuming victory—may tell us far less than is widely believed. The President will inevitably play to as many constituencies as he might plausibly attract, muddying the question of what his victory means. Did Mr. Reagan win because he was "pragmatic" after the shooting down of the Korean jet liner, or because he was "right wing" over Grenada? Did he win for supporting the Kemp tax cuts, or because he watered them down twice in 1981 and then passed four tax hikes? The only certainty is that the Hive will play the results as an affirmation that the public is much farther to the left—or rather, much "closer to the center"—than Mr. Reagan.

Nor will the presidential election necessarily tell us much about the future policy direction of the country. Some argue that a Ronald Reagan fresh from an election mandate will be bolder on policy fronts. But this did not happen with Richard Nixon or Dwight Eisenhower, the last two GOP candidates to win in a landslide. Nor did it happen in Mr. Reagan's second term as California governor. Mr. Reagan's campaign themes will of course be more conservative than Ike's or Nixon's, yet since becoming President, he has essentially based his decisions on "political reality"—reality defined less by John Lofton than by the *Washington Post*. William F. Buckley, Jr. argues that there has been no change in Mr. Reagan, that he "prefers to point the way" but wear the white hat, that he is a rhetorical right-winger but an operational centrist. Buckley is right. But then, it would be naive to expect the Reagan White House to change merely as a result of (yet another) mandate.

What we are really talking about is a principle typically used in economics,

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the concept of *marginality*. In the economy, the marginal businessman is that one businessman out of millions who will decide to move his factory, or fire one worker, or reduce by one widget his widget inventory, as a result of the next tiny increase in taxes, or the addition of one government form to his paperload, or a union wage-demand of one extra cent per hour. He who cannot think on the margin is doomed to misunderstand the world, because he will think in terms of how the average businessman, or the median income-earner, or "most" corporations will react to a change in policy. That is why supply-side economists such as Jude Wanniski understand that when it comes to incentives it is not the average person who necessarily counts. During the Depression, the "average person" was employed, and "most companies" did not go broke; it was the marginal person who was thrown out of work or who lost everything he owned in the stock market. Thus when John Kenneth Galbraith says that "the typical corporate executive" does not work any harder today than three years ago, before his tax cut, Galbraith is as right as he is irrelevant; it's just that somewhere, there is some untypical executive who *is* working harder. And that makes all the difference.

The same concept of marginality can be applied to politics. Somewhere in the country there is one race being run, one spot commercial being filmed, one petition drive being launched, that will infinitesimally affect the national debate on an issue. And that infinitesimal change will in turn produce a tiny shift in the balance of power within the White House staff or on some congressional committee—which could lead to a Kemp-Roth or a Social Security Act or a War Powers Resolution. Simply put, the question to ponder this election year is this: Where is the political margin in 1984?

One possibility is the state referendum. According to figures supplied by Sue Thomas of the National Center for Initiative Review near Denver, only 12 state ballot propositions appeared nationwide in 1970. By 1980 there were 45, and in 1982, an off-presidential election year, 58. Filing deadlines are not due in most states until August, but as of April, more than 300 offerings had been filed with secretaries of state across the country, compared to 226 for all of 1982. If past approval rates hold, this means 1984 could break the 100-barrier for state ballot propositions.

Such numbers alone tell us something about the popular mood, reflecting a growing dissatisfaction with political leaders who cannot practice what they preach. Of even greater interest, however, are the specifics. According to Mrs. Thomas, the leading theme of 1984 referenda so far is the reform of state legislatures. In California, where voters have been frustrated by Sacramento's circumvention of Proposition 13—and by the legislature's intransigence generally—Paul Gann, an original Proposition 13 sponsor, has a proposal on the ballot that would greatly curtail the power of the assembly and state senate leadership.

Meanwhile, Howard Jarvis, Gann's co-conspirator, has organized a "Save 13" resolution to overturn a series of state supreme court rulings that have watered down the tax cut's intended effect. A similar effort may take place in Florida, where the state supreme court has brazenly struck down the Floridian Proposition 13 that passed in 1982. In Michigan, where voters last year recalled a state legislator instrumental in passing a whopping tax hike, the people this fall will have a crack at the "Voters Choice Amendment," which would outlaw all tax hikes since 1981 not ratified by a direct popular vote. Under the threat of a similar effort, Illinois Governor Jim Thompson now plans to let $800 million in tax surcharges expire. Ohio's Richard Celeste, another old revenue enhancement monger, now wants a tax rebate. Last year Celeste had to battle a blue-collar tax cut initiative of his own, and the fight apparently took away any stomach for a rematch. Minnesota's Rudy Peprich seems to have learned the lesson more quickly. Before tax cutters in his state could move with plans to roll back the tax rates they indexed a few years ago, Peprich has launched a pre-emptive tax cut strike, offering to cut taxes by $225 million by July 1.

Tax cuts are not the only issues finding their way onto the ballot this year. A voluntary school prayer amendment is likely to be approved by West Virginia voters. The measure passed the 80-percent Democratic state legislature by an incredible 83-13 in the house and 23-11 in the senate. According to Mrs. Thomas, several efforts to end state government funding for abortion are afoot, most by well-run New Right troops with a solid record of getting on the ballot. Freezemania has subsided—so far only Montana is planning for such a resolution this fall.

In the last several months, more than ten Vermont towns have been voting for a different kind of freeze—on taxes.

And this one, for what it's worth, calls for the U.S. to stop waiting around for the Kremlin and go it alone with a unilateral freeze. No more of the "mutual, verifiable" flatulence that made the idea so attractive in 1982.

Have you read anything about Vermont town meetings lately? These were in the *avant-garde* of the freeze movement a few years ago. In the last several months, however, more than ten Vermont towns have been voting for a different kind of freeze—on taxes. In Springfield, they said no to a proposed 46 percent increase in the school budget. In little Ira, they defeated a 25 percent hike in education spending—barely enough to keep pace with inflation and overcome the "Reagan cuts." Colechester, a Burlington suburb, refused a 16 percent tax hike that would have been devoted to "services."

In his new book on the history of tax-cutting movements, James Adams of the *Wall Street Journal* shows that such shifts in popular opinion have proved a reliable barometer of the political climate throughout our history. Adams provides a mine of information on the efforts of such Presidents as Jefferson and Jackson to reduce the tax burden, and notes that tax-cutting Presidents—and Congresses—are usually made, not born. More often than not, the tax issue bubbles up in individual states or in grassroots movements before being accepted by, or forced upon, national leaders.

Using the same lens most observers are holding today—essentially, focusing on the presidential vote and total congressional seats—conventional wisdomers would have detected a mild liberal shift in the popular mood between 1974 and 1978. In those years, Democrats established two-thirds control of the House and gained in the Senate, and in 1976, scored the first victory over an incumbent since 1932. These gains were trimmed modestly in 1978, but by less than the typical loss of seats in an off-year. Yet it was in those years that Democrats in Congress bucked Mr. Carter and voted in a Kemp-style tax cut proposed by Senator Sam Nunn; that Proposition 13 succeeded in California; that the capital gains tax was cut, again with a strong assist from supply-side Democrats; that supply-side unknown Jeff Bell stunned Senator Clifford Case in the New Jersey primary. One politician who noticed such events was Mr. Reagan, the only 1980 Republican candidate to campaign on the Kemp-Roth tax bill.

Even in 1982, the leading indicators told a different story about popular opinion from that of conventional observers. Mr. Reagan supported a major tax increase and candidates from his party suffered accordingly, both from it and from the Volcker recession. Republicans lost seats in the House and seemed to be on the defensive generally. By December, the *New York Times* was writing tax-cut obituaries headlined "Reaganomics RIP," and the *Washington Post* was saying such things as "now that Reaganism is clearly dead . . . " Today, 18 months into a recovery, the Reagan Renaissance seems obvious. But it was hardly obvious in November 1982.

One newspaper that understood the '82 results was the *Washington Times,* which had this to say in an editorial on November 9 of that year:

Tuesday night sent network analysts and news pundits clawing through a pile of races in search of the results on the Reaganomics referendum. If it was a referendum they were interested in, they should have looked at the referen-

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da . . . By 57 to 43 percent, Maine voters approved a measure to index the state income tax. Ohioans rejected a proposed 1 cent addition to the sales tax . . . West Virginians voted 4 to 1 to limit local property taxes . . . Texans abolished the state property tax, 71 percent in favor . . .

. . . In Missouri, the voters rejected a hike in the gasoline tax; in Nevada, they passed two measures exempting home improvements, personal items, and energy conservation equipment from the property tax. Oregon cut some minor taxes, and it is worth noting that one of the nation's most radical tax reduction packages lost by just 1 percent. The same measure failed almost 2 to 1 there three years ago.

The paper's focus on these popular shifts put it consistently ahead of the establishment curve. As official talk focused on the need for tax hikes, and even supply-siders doubted further tax cuts were feasible, the *Times* wondered aloud why Ronald Reagan or Jack Kemp hadn't proposed a flat-tax bill. And this spring Kemp offered one. The flat tax promises to be a major campaign issue of 1984, but precious few members of the press were willing to consider it seriously in the fall of 1982. Similarly, the idea of "Star Wars" was dismissed even more quickly, if not ridiculed. The *Times* continued to thump for it, and Mr. Reagan signed on one year ago this March.

Another journalist to catch the significance of all this, one should note, is Fred Barnes of the *Baltimore Sun*, whose piece in *The American Spectator* of January 1983 perceived the same shifts in the political curve. The point seems clear: Those who ignore the state ballot in 1984 are likely to repeat and compound their errors of the last several years.

Since even popular tidal waves can be blocked by a sufficiently obstinate Congress, the character of Congress might be said to be this election year's second political margin. But "the character of Congress" is an elusive term. Is it simply a matter of the number of seats held by Republicans as opposed to Democrats? History suggests not.

Republicans held majorities in both houses during the early Eisenhower years, and retained the Senate until 1958, yet John F. Kennedy arguably did more to implement a conservative agenda. He attacked Ike's defense policy as too inflexible to respond to the Communist threat in Cuba and Europe. He pledged to "maintain the Bretton Woods gold standard" and ultimately passed huge tax cuts. Today these would all be considered extreme right-wing positions. The Republicans also gained seats in both houses of Congress in 1966 and 1968, but no notably conservative agenda followed. They seized the Senate in 1946, and prepared to thump Harry Truman in 1948, but the landslide never developed.

More likely, as Irving Kristol argues, it is less a question of changes in the balance of power *between* the parties than a question of changes *within* the parties themselves. Franklin Roosevelt may have crushed the Republicans in 1932, but his more lasting impact was his complete reshaping of the Democratic agenda and coalition. Similarly, one of the two most interesting debates today is between the old Kennedy Democrats—Morton Kondracke, Ben Wattenberg, Robert Strauss—and the McGovernites—Christopher Dodd, Alan Cranston, and, well, George McGovern. The former can all be heard bemoaning the growing power of the latter. This split seems to be taking place throughout the West. As in the U.S. so in Britain, France, and Germany: Former left-center coalitions have fallen into disarray—and not because the left has lost power, but because it no longer welcomes the center.

"For Maryland Republicans to succeed, they need to develop a more populist Republicanism."

Given this state of affairs on the left, all eyes should focus on the outcome of another inner-party squabble—between Republicans. Do Robert Dole, Howard Baker, and George Bush represent the GOP Future? Or is it in the hands of Lewis Lehrman, William Armstrong, and Jack Kemp? The balance of power is more even than one might think.

Consider three major issues on which there has been a major split between the GOP centrists and the GOP supply-siders or right-wingers or new-righters or whatever we might want to label them. These are: first, the bailout of the International Monetary Fund; second, Mr. Dole's 1982 tax hike; and third, the Simpson-Mazzoli immigration bill. We could choose other issues—how to respond to Soviet violations of arms control and human rights treaties, whether to go ahead with ABM defenses, and others. But each of the first three have come up for a direct vote, and in each case have enjoyed the support of virtually the entire establishment of both parties: Ronald Reagan, Tip O'Neill, Paul Volcker (except on Simpson-Mazzoli regarding which he's taken no position), the *New York Times,* the *Washington Post,* Robert Dole, Bob Michel, Howard Baker. With all this establishment support, where was the opposition?

It was in the House, and it came from a band of young turk Republicans including Kemp, Newt Gingrich, and Trent Lott. The scorecard shows how close the balance of power between the GOP camps is. Simpson-Mazzoli has failed in several attempts. The TEFRA tax hike passed, but only after major and unexpected difficulties, and one of its most salient provisions—withholding on dividends and interest—was later rolled back by Robert Kasten, a Senate young turk, and his allies in the House. The IMF bill also passed, but by less than ten votes. Meanwhile, the continuing stagnation of Argentina, Nigeria, and other debtor nations suggests the issue will live on—at least until the IMF ceases to demand tax-hikes and inflationary currency devaluations as a price for its largess. Interestingly enough, all of these fights placed the young turks in a notably populist position, fighting for the blue-collar votes that are arguably the cutting edge of politics today. The opposition to a "big bank bailout" certainly did not come from the old eastern Rockefeller GOP, but from a curious alliance including such disparate elements as Howard Phillips, Ralph Nader, *Conservative Digest,* and the *New Republic.* The letters that flooded Capitol Hill over interest withholding, contrary to the Hive's drumbeat, had little to do with big banks. They were spurred on by the small savings and loans that suffer the most from new increments of paperwork, and were written by elderly women and working families who resented another form to fill out or another intrusion by the tax man. Ironically enough, the best essay on this submerged Republican feud has been written by a Naderite, Tyler Bridges. It appeared in the January issue of *People and Taxes* magazine under the headline: "The Split Between Supply-Siders and Corporate Lobbyists: The Untold Story."

In this battle for the Republican soul, a shift of a few seats—in the House—could spell all the difference. The House is the cutting edge. If we further assume that moderate Republican incumbents are safe in 1984—if they aren't, the argument which follows is only strengthened—then a handful of presently open or Democratic districts will prove to be the cutting edge of that cutting edge. For this is where any gains by the young turks must take place. One could list up to 50 such districts. Interviews with more than a dozen officials, from the Republican party, Reagan's re-election campaign, the Democratic party, and such consulting groups as Nofziger and Bragg, Polyconomics, and Black, Manaforte, and Stone, suggest three races have particular significance. While Jeff Greenfield drones on with scientific projections about who will carry Mississippi as of 7:28 p.m. EST, November 6, my dial will be spinning from channel to channel to find out what is happening to congressional hopefuls David Smick, Gregory Hyatt, and Ken Blackwell.

For as long as anyone can remember, Maryland's 2nd district—north of Baltimore—has been represented by Congressman Clarence Long. And why not? Long is a Democrat in a district that is 3-to-1 Democratic. He votes the labor line in a district that is heavily unionized. The typical Republican challenge to Long is a conventional assault on his "liberal" voting record, or his tendency to enlarge the "federal deficit." An old-style Democrat, Long has been swatting down these familiar challenges for years, talking about his support for "jobs," his opposition to tax cuts for "the rich," and so on.

But this time, Long may not be facing your conventional GOP opponent. Marylander Dave Smick has spent several years preparing for this race, and there are signs that both Long and Smick's primary opponent, Helen Bentley, Maryland's answer to Millicent Fenwick, are ill-equipped to meet the Smick challenge. In a district with heavy pockets of unemployment, Long has dug himself in against any kind of federal enterprise zones. This fumble has already infuriated Baltimore Mayor Schaefer, an enterprise zone enthusiast, and other top Democrats in the area. And Mrs. Bentley, in a March 22 debate, attacked the Reagan economic program with the observation that she would have voted against Kemp-Roth had she been in Congress in 1981. Perhaps that is why she is a two-time loser to Mr. Long.

Smick, by contrast, helped draft the Kemp-Garcia enterprise zone bill now before Congress, and has written regularly on the subject for the *Baltimore Sun.* He was a leading opponent of the Federal Reserve's '81-82 tight money policy and favors a dollar backed by gold as the solution to high interest rates. Long, like most politicians, seems simply too lazy to bother learning about monetary policy at all. To Long, all this talk about tax incen-

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tives and entrepreneurship and inner-city progress must seem hopelessly arcane. Yet to Smick, who as an aide to Kemp has watched the former football player roll up 80 percent of the vote and more in his blue-collar Buffalo district, it is all so simple.

"This is precisely how political parties are built," Smick wrote last fall in the *Sun*. "In the 1940s, a man named Hubert Horatio Humphrey became Mayor of Minneapolis in Republican-dominated Minnesota. Wielding a bold agenda of new ideas, he forged the new Democratic Farmer Party—and the GOP didn't know what hit them . . . For Maryland Republicans to succeed, they need to develop a more populist Republicanism, in the best sense of the word, which reaches out to the blue collar worker, the shopkeeper, and the struggling entrepreneur." Of course, studies have always shown that small businesses generate more new products, and many more new jobs, than established firms. And a recent Small Business Administration survey suggests they hire more women, minorities, youths, and first-time job seekers as well—an engine of opportunity that targets its benefits to the needy without a single bureaucrat present. But do the voters really understand all this amid the steady drumbeat that such arguments are Horatio Alger stuff?

"You'd be surprised," Smick says. "You know, I always read Jude Wanniski's arguments that the people understand economic policy instinctively, but I never believed it like I do now, after getting out and campaigning. They really do, and I have a much easier time explaining enterprise zones to a group of unemployed black teenagers, or a bunch of factory workers, than I did to some so-called educated people in Washington.

"Gold is a good example of this. A lot of people have been advising me to play down the criticism of the Fed, that monetary policy just isn't an issue. Well, of course it isn't an issue, in the sense that, five or six years ago, Kemp-Roth and tax cuts and enterprise zones weren't issues. But economic growth and jobs and opportunity—these are issues, always will be. A sound dollar and tax cuts and enterprise zones—these are the answers to the issue. It really isn't hard to explain to a housewife or a teenager or a working man who haven't had their heads filled with all the wrong ideas." As we go to press, Smick's primary race against Mrs. Bentley is far from certain. What is certain is that this race between conventional wisdomer Bentley and the populist Smick will be a fascinating and important contest on the margin.

Another young turk is Gregory Hyatt. This year he is offering a populist alternative to a Massachusetts district that has generally been forced to choose between liberal Democrats and elitist Republicans. Mr. Hyatt made his name in Massachusetts when he criss-crossed the state in 1980 plugging Proposition 2½, the Bay State's version of Proposition 13. Hyatt won over not only the voters, but even the *Boston Globe* and much of an initially skeptical press. Hyatt does not face the kind of heavy Democratic registration that will confront Smick—in fact, his district voted 44-39 for Ronald Reagan in 1980 and 61-39 for Hyatt's Proposition 2½. Moreover, he is seeking a seat now occupied by Congressman James Shannon, who will be taking his 90-plus ADA rating into the race for Paul Tsongas's Senate seat this year.

Hyatt, like many Republicans, plans to run on the economic recovery, but unlike many Republicans, he will not stop there. Hyatt campaign literature talks about "taking on the entrenched politicians, bureaucrats, and special interests." Over the phone, Hyatt says he would like to support "some kind of flat tax, probably not perfectly flat and definitely not doing away with the home mortgage exemption. But I would keep cutting the rates, simplify the code, and drop several million people off the tax rolls altogether, like Margaret Thatcher did. Certainly, people making $12,000 or less should pay no taxes." Like most other Republican hopefuls, Hyatt is understandably reluctant to talk about areas where he might try to prod a second-term Reagan into more vigorous action. His record, however, suggests Hyatt would be no rubber-stamp. As an undergraduate, he penned some of the wittiest attacks on New Haven pieties the *Yale Daily News* has seen since William F. Buckley. More recently, he was one of a group of officials dedicated to eliminating the Department of Education. Hyatt quietly left at about the time it became clear that the original Reagan agenda of tuition tax credits and elimination of the Department was being scuttled.

Another new breed of Republican is former Cincinnati mayor Ken Blackwell, who wants to unseat Congressman Tom Luken in that city. As mayor, Blackwell helped design an innovative desegregation plan that saved Cincinnati from forced busing. Luken, on the other hand, helped design the nuclear freeze. Blackwell will counter with a call for strategic defense. Luken is lukewarm to the idea of enterprise zones. Blackwell plans to make the idea a major campaign issue in Ohio, one of the few states where unemployment lagged above 10 percent into 1984. Indeed, it was Blackwell who helped steer the Kemp-Garcia bill to approval by the National Conference of Mayors and the United Conference of Mayors.

The district itself provides a classic showdown: half inner-city, half suburban, an almost perfect balance between Republican and Democratic registrants, a mix, Mr. Blackwell says, that will keep any congressman on his toes. "No one from this district will be able to go to Washington and sit on his hands," Blackwell says. "It's too even. But then, I don't plan to go to all this work just to be a follower. I will have some ideas of my own in Washington."

People who track all 435 districts say there are Blackwells and Hyatts all over the country. Congressman Jim Jones of Oklahoma, a major pothole in the road to smaller government, faces a pair of tough challengers for his seat. Robert Dornan, one of the most conservative members of the House until he gave up his seat to run for the Senate, is trying for a comeback in a new district near Orange County. In New Hampshire, Larry Brady and Bob Smith are both mounting a serious challenge for the seat opened up by Norman D'Amours. Brady was one of the few members of the Reagan Commerce Department to fight for a tougher stand against the flow of high technology and cheap credits to the Kremlin. Others to watch are Minnesota's Pat Truman, Michigan's Tom Ritter, Oregon's Drew Davis, Indiana's Ken MacKenzie, and Judy Petty of Arkansas.

The addition of nine or ten Hyatts and Smicks and Blackwells to Congress might do more to change the complexion of that body than a hundred Charles Percys. History again lends a supporting argument. Consider Arthur Schlesinger's description of how just such a congressional vanguard was crucial to the progress of the New Deal, forcing FDR into an aggressive, activist stance:

> The 1934 election . . . [brought] into Congress a new breed of New Deal Democrats—men like Schwellenbach of Washington, Minton of Indiana, Guffey of Pennsylvania, Truman of Missouri in the Senate, and . . . the members of the Maury Maverick group in the House—who combined the party regularity of the older Democrats with the liberal fervor of the older progressives . . . The national legislature at this time contained strong, independent-minded, and intelligent men . . . Far from being a servile body, it played a vital and consistently underestimated role in shaping the New Deal . . . In these early years, Congress was as often to the left of Roosevelt as to the right.

Different observers may place the keys to 1984 elsewhere. Nonetheless, it is strange to find so much discussion, particularly among conservatives, dominated by the race for the top spot. After all, conservatives are supposed to believe in the power of local government and the importance of the individual entrepreneur. Perhaps George Will is right—and somewhere in every right-winger there beats a centrist heart. Perhaps the problem with government today is really not the Congress at all. But that is not likely to be the campaign theme of most Republicans, or certainly of Ronald Reagan, in 1984. In any event, see you this November. On the margin. □

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Richard Brookhiser

A MUGGING IN THE GROVES: THE STORY OF THE *YALE LITERARY MAGAZINE*

Yale giveth, and Yale taketh away.

The publicity generated by the struggles of the *Yale Literary Magazine* with Yale University is, in part, a testament to the American caste system. A fight over the *Yellow Book* of a land-grant college or a Baptist seminary would probably not make "Sixty Minutes" and the *New York Times.* It has also been treated, with some justification, as a political issue—liberals quashing conservative dissent.

Mostly, it offers a window into the world of the academy: a view of how things happen, and to whom.

• • •

The *Yale Literary Magazine* is the oldest collegiate periodical in America, indeed the oldest continuously published magazine—since 1821—of any kind. In its palmy days, it was a campus institution of importance. When critic Maynard Mack (Yale '32) worked on it, there were twelve hundred paying student subscribers. "Subscribing to it was one of the things you did. We were well-heeled. We once gave the *Banner* [the yearbook] $1,000 to help them survive."

By the sixties, the palmy days had long gone. The *Lit* went bankrupt in 1969, and was acquired by the once-indigent *Banner.* Money wasn't all it lacked. Students had largely stopped reading it, or writing for it. The paying circulation in the spring of 1978 had sunk to 25, all of it off campus.

At this juncture three students took an interest in the moribund magazine. Mary Schwarz (class of '79) now works as a program coordinator for the John M. Olin Foundation. Lee Liberman ('79) clerks for a judge on the Court of Appeals (D.C. Circuit). The third student was Andrei Navrozov.

Navrozov was not your typical Yalie (no one is supposed to be, but some are less typical than others). He and his parents, taking advantage of a Jewish ancestor, had left the Soviet Union during the détente emigrations, and come to New York in 1972. They gave up a comfortable, indeed a privileged, life; Andrei's father, Lev, was a successful translator, and Gromyko had been one of the neighbors. Andrei had never had to attend a Soviet school.

I first met Navrozov when he was a freshman. He had a mustache, which he has since, mercifully, shaved off. He spoke in headlong rushes, unfinished sentences piling into each other, like skidding cars. In his free time, between fitful bursts of schoolwork, he translated Russian poetry. He had a smallish circle of friends, to whom he stuck closely, among them Liberman and Schwarz. One of their daydreams, hardly a plan, was to run a journal. "It seemed like it would be a good way to spend my life," Liberman recalled later. "I would be able to do interesting things with friends." In the spring of his senior year, Navrozov gave three of his translations to the floundering *Lit.*

By then time had run out on the magazine, at least as far as its publishers were concerned. The *Banner* had offered it to the Elizabethan Club, a campus literary society, which wouldn't touch it. Schwarz was slated to be editor in the fall of 1978, but, Liberman recalls, "there wasn't going to be a next edition, unless the *Banner* managed to sell it." The reverie was suddenly and unexpectedly within reach. In July 1978, Yale Banner Publications, Inc. sold the copyright, assets, and good will of the *Yale Literary Magazine* to Navrozov, Schwarz, and Liberman for one dollar.

"We were immediately in a state of panic," Navrozov remembers. "We worked eighteen hours a day." Their goal was a high-brow journal with a national audience, and a top quality format. "We wanted to make it into the sort of magazine that we would want to work for." They envisioned full color art reproductions, and combed the back issues of American and English magazines for congenial writers.

Their plans required large infusions of cash. The new editors compiled a list of *Lit* alumni from old mastheads and sent out a solicitation. With the money that came in they paid a deposit on a four-color brochure, which went to the entire Yale alumni list. One thousand old Blues paid up front. In the spring of 1979, they got the first issue of the new editors.

The magazine Navrozov wanted to work for began with its weakest feature, "Leader," an editorial which read like a foreign-language "Talk of the Town," imperfectly translated into English. ("We knew genius when we saw Philip Larkin's twelve-line poem 'The Trees.' We rushed off in search for more novities of the same kind . . . ") Things improved considerably thereafter. One poem by a Yale junior; one that came in over the transom; seven that were solicited; four translated by Navrozov (he has not contributed to the magazine since). *Pensées* by the French essayist E.M. Cioran. Art work by Igor Galanin, a fellow émigré; on the cover, four women, skating among gold and silver tree trunks (the author of the accompanying piece was—this author). Heavy stock, beautiful colors, ads for galleries, a bank, saddlery.

The backbone of the issue was a 37-page essay by Lev Navrozov, on the West and the Soviet Union. Tonally, it was scored in its lighter passages for kettle drums, in its heavier ones for pneumatic drills. Along the way, it delivered drop kicks to the CIA, the *New Yorker,* George Kennan, Zbigniew Brzezinski, James Joyce, and Sigmund Freud. Lev, it should be noted, had published a book on the Soviet Union (*The Education of Lev Navrozov*), as well as articles in *Commentary,* and so might well have been picked out by an editor of Andrei's

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predilections, even if they had not possessed common genes.

And what were Navrozov's predilections? Politically, he insists, he is a "free thinker." "I don't believe in movements. Either ideas are self-generated. Or they are received—which makes them worthless." In the common marketplace, his particular free thoughts are readily identified as conservative. Besides Navrozov *père* on the Soviet Union, the new *Lit* has run pieces celebrating the free market; the thought of James Burnham; the early days of *National Review*. Conservative foundations have supported it: Olin, the Institute for Educational Affairs, the Scaife Family Charitable Trusts.

In July 1978, Yale Banner Publications, Inc. sold the copyright, assets, and good will of the *Yale Literary Magazine* to Navrozov, Schwarz, and Liberman for one dollar.

The magazine's aesthetic polemics were, if anything, even sharper. "The following kinds of verse," the *Lit* announced on a campus poster, "have the poorest chance of being published: . . . verse imitating the moderns because it would give itself away by imitation of the classics; prose written as verse to sound significant; verse scenes of horror or sex . . . " "I look on them," Navrozov says of big-name best-sellers like *Rabbit is Rich* or *Ancient Evenings,* "as generic products: 'Highbrow Book with Smut.' "

The new *Lit* mixed art and politics in its next major subscription drive. In the Winter 1980 issue, the third under Andrei's tenure, Lev reviewed an issue of the *New York Review of Books*. It was a pan. "Epigonic snobbery . . . stewing in platitudes . . . cultural name-dropping . . . ghastly spiritual tatters." The *Lit* rented the *Review*'s subscription list and sent Lev's bouquet to each reader. Eight hundred new subscribers came in.

All this time, the *Lit* was registered with the university as an undergraduate organization. All the staff, except Navrozov, were students. The *Lit* got from Yale a small office, a phone, and an account into which supporters could pay tax-deductible contributions. (The *Lit* had paid for its use of the alumni list.)

Navrozov's only brush with officialdom occurred in 1980. That February he ran into A. Bartlett Giamatti on the train to New York. Giamatti, a professor of English and Comparative Literature specializing in the Renaissance, had become president of Yale the same summer Navrozov bought the *Lit*. The two of them, Giamatti recalls, had a "nice chat." Navrozov gave him a copy of the latest issue, Giamatti admired the graphics. They discussed the *Lit*'s finances.

These were parlous. Each issue had cost between twenty and thirty thousand dollars to print, and the *Lit* was over $70,000 in debt. Navrozov remembers Giamatti suggesting that the *Lit* incorporate; Giamatti doesn't. Both agree that the new president advised the young editor to get in touch with the university administration.

There followed, during the spring, and stretching into the summer, a series of meetings between Navrozov, Associate Dean Charles Long, and a lawyer from Yale's General Counsel's office. (Navrozov had no legal advice, scarcely any editorial advice—Schwarz and Liberman had left New Haven the year before.) One internal Yale memo, a briefing paper for Giamatti, noted the *Lit*'s "rather curious right-wing support." But Yale's concerns at this point were legal, and financial (the magazine, besides running a deficit, had gotten some sizable contributions from Yale alumni, which irked the university's fund-raisers). In the end, acting on Yale's advice, Navrozov set up a nonprofit corporation to publish the *Lit,* which he promised to keep registered as an undergraduate organization. He also agreed that the University could revoke the Yale name if he broke its rules.

Navrozov balked only once, over the wording of the revocation clause. But Long told him to be more trusting. "I cannot imagine," he wrote, "that the Secretary's Office would act precipitously or arbitrarily." The American Literary Society, publishers of the *Yale Literary Magazine,* was incorporated at the end of August 1980, and Navrozov went back to work on the fourth issue, featuring an attack on the *New York Times*.

Yale made one investigation of Navrozov's compliance. In June 1981, Henry Chauncey, Secretary of the University, sent Giamatti a report on the *Lit*. A dull document, it nevertheless puts in perspective much that followed. Chauncey found that the student staff of the magazine in fact knew what was going on; that student authors were not excluded from its pages; that there was "ample precedent" in other organizations for non-undergraduates like Navrozov having a role. A clean bill of health, from Yale's own examiner.

Until the fall of 1981, there was little private criticism of these arrangements, and almost no public complaint. The storm that now broke over the *Lit* and the university struck some noncombatants as part of a larger phenomenon. Across the Ivy League, conservative student newspapers, funded by many of the same institutions which backed Navrozov, had begun twitting teachers, administrators, and generally raising hell. The lustiest of these, the *Dartmouth Review,* waged war on black studies, gay rights, and the Dartmouth hierarchy; in response, an enraged administrator bit one of the editors. The issues raised by the *Lit* were both less and more parochial—less because Navrozov conceived himself to be taking on the tastemakers of the outside world; more, because he had transformed an old Yale fixture to do so. Both factors account for the bitterness of the ensuing criticism.

One of the most vocal critics was the poet and professor of English, John Hollander. Hollander won't talk about the *Lit* now, but in 1981 he talked to anyone who would listen. Back in April, he told the *Yale Daily News Magazine* that the *Lit* was "becoming increasingly political," with "right-wing tendencies." In September, he was quoted by a story in the *Hartford Courant* ("Literature, Politics Mix Poorly at Yale"): "It's outrageous that the *Yale Lit* has become something personal and ideological." In November, he was back in the *Yale Daily News*. "It's being controlled by outside hands and used for sectarian and political reasons."

Hollander taught courses in writing and was thus in contact with the kind of Yalies who had once sustained the *Lit*. It was in their interests, he and the *Lit*'s other critics claimed, that they were protesting. That is still the claim today. "The *Yale Literary Magazine* has traditionally been an organ of undergraduates at Yale," says Peter Brooks, professor of French and Comparative Literature. "It should not be alienated from them." Students on the staff, the occasional student poem—five, by the fall of 1981—these were not enough to make it a true undergraduate organization. "I'd be just as cross," Hollander assured the *Courant,* "if a left-wing group took it over and didn't really include students."

Yet, strangely, the theme of politics, like a Wagnerian motif, kept popping up. Brooks complained in the *Courant* that "the name of Yale has become an illegitimate banner for a group of people and their ideologies." William Styron, side-swiped in Lev's *New York Review of Books* piece, called it "an extremely right-wing hatchet job." The journalistic brouhaha reached the rural solitude of Archibald MacLeish ('15). The aged poet laureate of the establishment wrote Giamatti asking how it was that the *Lit* was now in the hands of "right-wing propagandists."

Sometimes the denials of partisanship almost overtook the original polemics. Navrozov's backers, the *Yale Daily News* editorialized, "are rich. They are conservative. They drive Rolls Royces—or so the *Lit*'s ads would indicate.

"We do not condemn the *Lit*'s conservative, anti-Soviet ideology. Its political stance is irrelevant to the central issue . . . "

The art drew as much flak as the politics. People disliked the ads, the aphorisms, the poetry, the paper. Maynard Mack complained of excessive "glossiness," MacLeish of "parlor room vulgarity."

In the critics' eyes, however, the culpable party was not Navrozov, but Yale. Yale had been remiss in allowing the magazine to change hands in

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the first place. The *News* urged it to get the *Lit* back.

Navrozov, faced with open enemies, responded in the manner of his father: a two-page letter, *fortissimo,* to the *Courant,* six pages to the *News.* Yale was more circumspect. Giamatti told the *News* the matter would be studied, and he told the *News*'s editorial board to cool it. "They were not doing themselves or anybody any good by objecting to the content," he remembers saying.

Privately, Yale considered its options. In January 1982, Howard Lamar, the Dean of Yale College, wrote to a disgruntled English professor that he and David Henson, Dean of Student Affairs, were "trying to find ways to return control of the *Lit* to a proper Yale constituency."

The way that was found—the passive voice seems appropriate to the bureaucratic process—came out of Navrozov's 1980 negotiations with Charles Long. The incorporation papers bound Navrozov, on pain of losing the Yale name, to abide by the regulations and policies "adopted from time to time" by Yale. Clearly, it was time to adopt some new ones.

A general revision of the undergraduate regulations had been in the works for some months. Yale had worries about several student groups, past and potential. In the seventies, the Yale chapter of Young Americans for Freedom had proposed a debate between conservative columnist William Rusher and the bizarro geneticist, William Shockley, then enjoying a *vogue de scandale.* But the Left did not want Shockley on campus, even to be challenged, and their threats of disruption, and YAF's persistence, gave Yale numerous headaches. The administration was also alarmed by the growing professionalism of the senior singing group, the Whiffenpoofs, particularly by the time off from school its members were taking, the better to concertize.

But the immediate problem was the *Lit.* When the new rules finally came out, in September 1982, Navrozov's walking papers were presented in Appendix C, section K, subsection 3 ("Publications"): " . . . decisions about the contents of each periodical, the editorial policy, and the business policies and practices are to be controlled by enrolled Yale College undergraduate students." Later that month, a student interested in starting up a conservative newspaper asked David Henson how the new regulations affected the *Lit.* "There will be no more *Yale Literary Magazines,*" Henson explained. (Henson later denied, and the student affirmed, the story under oath.)

The battle over the *Lit* has moved outside the academic world in which it began. In October 1982, Navrozov filed suit against Yale, Giamatti, and three other administrators, for trying to suppress his publication. Yale filed a counterclaim, to enjoin Navrozov from using the name, *Yale Literary Magazine.*

Navrozov won the PR war hands down. Conservatives—James J. Kilpatrick, M. Stanton Evans, *National Review*—adopted him as one of their own. To others, Navrozov successfully portrayed himself as a brash underdog, Yale as a ponderous Goliath.

In court Navrozov's brashness served him less well. For the trial, he had secured, *pro bono,* the services of Robert D'Agostino, a former deputy assistant attorney general for civil rights in the Reagan Administration. Under Connecticut law, defendants must show "good cause" for employing an out-of-state lawyer, which D'Agostino was—a request routinely granted in most cases. Three days before Navrozov's case opened, in October 1983, the judge ruled that D'Agostino could not argue the case, throwing the entire burden on the local lawyer who was to have acted as an assistant. The judge further denied a motion for a stay. Whereupon Navrozov refused to take the stand.

"My conscience tells me this has been a denial of my right of due process," he told the court. That week the *Lit* sent out a thirty-page press release entitled "The Making of a Political Crime."

Navrozov-less, the trial produced little drama. Henson and his student interlocutor, as noted above, contradicted each other. Charles Long testified that the Navrozovs were not the only family with literary ties. In the early days of the controversy, Long said, Professor Hollander had complained to him "that a group of students, which included his daughter, thought they should have the right to the magazine, and what was Yale College doing about that." Hollander denied saying any such thing. Giamatti testified that the extracurricular undergraduate experience was "very important."

After a Thanksgiving recess to consider the evidence, the judge ruled down the line for Yale. The *Lit* is appealing. With a Connecticut lawyer.

The magazine's debts have been paid. Navrozov and his colleagues have put out twelve issues, raised and spent nearly a million dollars. One of the eeriest features of the controversy is the total silence, from Navrozov's critics, on this aspect of his efforts. Literary journals, it would seem, grow like stalagmites, or mold, spontaneously. The question of legal title is thus purely a matter for speculation. The Yale professoriat not only scorns to weigh the competing interpretations of contracts, it does not even acknowledge the labor theory of value.

Navrozov's efforts have changed the magazine. Often, in his open letters and press releases, he blurs this fact, arguing that the *Lit* has always published pieces by real world literati, as well as students. This is specious. The proportion of contributions in the old *Lit* by non-Yalies like Rudyard Kipling or Ezra Pound was tiny. Nowadays, it is the student work (eight poems in twelve issues) that is thin.

Still, the magazine is a Yale publication. Half the solicited articles and poems in the last issue of 1983 were brought in by Navrozov, half by Kate Dalton, a staff member in the senior class. This division of labor satisfied the Secretary of the University as late as 1981. What changed?

"In the sixties, there was a tremendous destruction of institutions," argues David Frum ('82), a former columnist for the *Yale Daily News.* "In the early eighties, they're starting to come back." No doubt there was genuine interest in giving the old mag another try. No doubt, Navrozov's success with it also piqued desire.

Then there was the matter of Navrozov's literary judgment. The prejudices that control taste are the more stringent for being unspoken. Critics of the *Lit*'s literature confined themselves to generalities, "pretentious" and "precious" probably being the favorites. Maybe it was. But it was definitely *outré.* The heroes of American writing classes are not cool miniaturists like Philip Larkin. "We challenged," says Mary Schwarz, "the salons."

Politics completed the recipe for a campus explosion. New management, odd poems, cold warfare—any one might have been tolerable, even any two. All three were bound to give offense.

But not to the administration. Giamatti and his subordinates did not care about politics or art, or even, at first, undergraduates. Their overriding concerns throughout were those of good housekeeping—tidying ragged edges and loose ends, keeping peace at the table. When the squalling started, however, the same motives impelled them to side with the loudest lungs. "The notion that Yale somehow bent itself out of shape," says Giamatti in his own defense, "is a red herring." True enough. But the Yale bureaucracy allowed itself to be bent.

During our conversation Maynard Mack mused on the *Lit*'s ups and downs. Imaginative editors—John Hersey in the thirties, Mack himself—had always managed to pull it out of previous declines. What was needed in the last decade was "somebody with a little vigor to take hold of the thing and put it on the map again." That of course was exactly what Andrei Navrozov did. Only he rubbed Yale too many wrong ways. □

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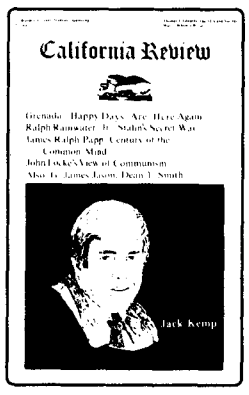

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Peter Shaw

LITERARY LIES OF RESPECTABLE LIBERALS

The problems faced by Irving Howe & Co. can't all be blamed on the "little despots" of neoconservatism.

The intellectuals who joined in opposition to the countercultural Left in the late 1960s eventually parted company. Those who regarded the sixties as a deviation having no bearing on the essential agenda of liberalism and socialism took up where they had left off. In contrast, those intellectuals just coming to be known as the neoconservatives believed that the sixties had exposed essential flaws and dangers within the liberal and socialist creeds. This group continued to battle against the political programs and cultural values of the sixties as they expressed themselves in the less militant terms of the 1970s. Eventually the split in attitudes between the former allies produced considerable animosity. Yet when it came to the cultural values that had originally united them, the two sides remained in agreement. Both held to the complexities and difficulties of the modernist tradition; both defended the autonomy of high culture against demands that it render itself socially useful.

Now, in a recent address, Irving Howe has set forth the grounds for a cultural breach between the former allies. "Toward An Open Culture" was delivered at a symposium of the New York Council for the Humanities and reprinted in the March 5, 1984 *New Republic*. In this talk Howe distinguished two kinds of attitudes toward new literary developments. The one, his own, is represented as liberally open and receptive. It is to be thought of as corresponding to an undiminished commitment to liberal social values. The other attitude is the product of "today's conservative outlook [that] seems dominant or at least increasingly powerful." This second attitude is marked by "an uneasiness with and sometimes distaste for minority subcultures: blacks, women, gays."

Howe argues that the literary culture, in the name of democratic values, should be willing to accept writers from these groups at the expense of "a momentary decline or even, in some respects, a permanent decline in cultural standards." As it turns out, he is not really worried about such a decline, for he believes that the historical record shows a positive outcome in similar situations. Repeatedly in literature, he writes, that which has seemed new, rough, "proletarian," vulgar has in the end proved to revivify the tradition. In America "each breakthrough" by writers like Sherwood Anderson and Theodore Dreiser "was seen as a threat to established standards by the genteel cultural establishment of the East."

Howe praises William Dean Howells, the writer most frequently associated with the genteel tradition, for having broken through the prejudices of his time to champion two such new, rough talents: Abraham Cahan and Stephen Crane. (The example of Crane does not perfectly serve, for he had published three novels, including *The Red Badge of Courage* and a book of poems, to considerable publicity by the time Howells wrote in 1896; Crane was, moreover, already a highly polished stylist—arguably the finest one then writing.) Howe in effect represents himself as a kind of Howells of the present day: an established literary figure able to "embrace" the new even when its aspect may be unsettling to less democratically inspired literary sensibilities. He presents himself, one may say, as an establishment rebel. Thus he writes, "I would propose a rule of thumb: criticize whichever outlook is dominant at the moment, whether in the sphere of cultural opinion or public decision."

All of this sounds doughty, insouciant, risk-taking, and in keeping, as Howe points out, with the openness and optimism of Whitman's inspiring *Democratic Vistas*. The trouble, though, is that the descriptions of both present literary realities and their historical precedents are demonstrably inaccurate. Moreover, were they not inaccurate, Howe would be contradicting himself. For, borrowing perhaps from a formulation offered by the critic Richard Chase some quarter of a century ago, Howe declares that "democratic cultures move ahead . . . through internal struggle." Thus since he approves of "a tense engagement with the culture of one's time," he should welcome conservative resistance to unconventional new writers. But the point is that at the present time writers from "minority subcultures" typically do *not* meet with resistance. On the contrary, theirs is all too likely to be an automatically enthusiastic welcome from the critical community. Similarly, the historical record for the turn of the century simply does not support the notion of an effete literary community shrinking from "any soiling plebeian touch."

Take the case of Dreiser, the major figure from the "plebeian Midwest" of the period. Popular myth to the contrary, his *Sister Carrie* was not rejected by genteel critics when it appeared in 1900. Despite the fact that the book came from an unknown author and was released without publicity, it was called "a noteworthy addition to American literature" by one reviewer, and "a great American novel" by another. Its author was compared favorably to Balzac, and declared to have outdone Hamlin Garland and William Dean Howells, the reigning realists of the day. As Professor Jack Salzman summarizes the case in his introduction to *Theodore Dreiser: The Critical Reception,* there were some unfavorable reviews of *Sister Carrie,* but the remarkable fact is that "many who read the novel were able to recognize an element of greatness in it."

The Dreiser case illustrates that liberal cultures do not have a monopoly on openness to the new. On the contrary, unconventional new voices in literature probably stand the best chance of acceptance from elite cultures. Thus if anything, *Sister Carrie*'s reception in the older, more sophisticated culture of England was still more enthusiastic than in America. The English compared Dreiser not only to Balzac, but more accurately to Zola as well.

It is instructive to note the manner in which the myth of resistance to Dreiser originally sprang up. When *Sister Carrie* was reissued in 1907, it was widely greeted with enthusiasm as a previously suppressed work—this despite the fact that its 1907 advertising blurbs drew on the favorable reviews of the original American and

Peter Shaw has written for Commentary, *the* New Criterion, *and other periodicals. He is author, most recently, of* American Patriots and the Rituals of Revolution *(Harvard).*

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English editions. The myth of the shunned proletarian that Howe has adopted, this is to say, was itself a product of genteel literary culture.

But there is another element of the Dreiser myth as Howe presents it that bears more importantly on his analysis of the current literary situation. This is the notion that Dreiser brought into the literary culture what Howe calls "new rhythms," a "coarsening of taste," and "the unruly, the uncouth, the 'barbaric.' " It is astonishing that Howe can have forgotten Lionel Trilling's well-known refutation of this caricature in the essay "Reality in America." Dreiser's liberal champions, Trilling there pointed out, confused Dreiser's "plebeian origin" with his prose. Dreiser was undeniably an awkward stylist, but this was not because he brought some sort of unliterary, proletarian vigor to the novel. On the contrary, his defect was repeatedly and ludicrously to strive for what he thought of as elegant, impressive, "literary" diction. In the final analysis, Dreiser was "not only genteel but fancy."

When one turns from Dreiser to the current literary situation, the true state of affairs can be gleaned from Howe's own description of a neoconservative *uneasiness* with rather than opposition to or suppression of new writing. His implication is that some kind of genteel, literary fastidiousness prevails. But the uneasiness that he has identified has a different source. It is largely a result of the atmosphere of sanctimonious praise that has come to surround minority group writing. In addition, the uneasiness is a product of the aggressiveness with which the same writing is championed. In truth, whatever there is of intimidation in the air these days is directed not at new writers but at their potential critics, who have largely fallen silent.

That one simply cannot speak freely when it comes to the groups Howe wishes us to encourage, he himself was one of the first to learn. When in 1962 he published an essay on the literary situation for black writers, he became embroiled in a lengthy exchange with Ralph Ellison. Howe had suggested that the black struggle for equality was such an overriding reality that it was bound to claim a dominant role in the black fiction of the future. For this prediction he was accused by Ellison of attempting to force black writers into a political and social role of convenience to himself but violative of their literary autonomy. Howe protested his innocence of any patronizing or limiting tendency, but Ellison insisted that the white man was once again trying to put him in a "jug"—that is, forcing him into a predetermined, caricatured role as a "good Negro." Though not conceding Ellison's case, Howe fell silent. After this, despite the fact that his predictions for black writing were largely borne out, he offered no further observations on the subject.

Most certainly, Howe never delivered a negative critique of a black or other minority writer in the fashion of his well-known decimation of Philip Roth. This essay appeared in 1972 in *Commentary,* and was a good example of the then continuing cultural alliance between liberals and neoconservatives. In the same issue, Norman Podhoretz expressed his literary agreement with Howe but offered a cultural-political explanation for Roth's popularity with which, he remarked, Howe was not likely to agree. Philip Roth seems never to have recovered from Howe's attack. Over the years he obsessively returned to it in essays, interviews, and a trilogy of novels. In writing about Roth, Howe was not in search of a vivifying coarseness. Nor was he in a mood to celebrate vulgarity in defiance of genteel opinion. On the contrary, he found Roth's work "deeply marred by vulgarity," by the author's "thin personal culture," and by an intrusive "rassentiment." Howe's terms came from the genteel or at least the high-toned Jamesian tradition in American letters. Roth lacked "compositional rigor and moral seriousness." His shortcomings were those of "literary tact" and an absence of "sustained coherence of form."

One hardly expects Howe to impose the same demands on minority group writers. Some of them are tyros, as Roth was not in 1972; and furthermore, by now Howe's literary eminence is such that any unfavorable criticism from him would be devastating. He has wisely chosen to concentrate at this stage of his career on singling out worthy writing—a project he has carried out with exemplary good taste through his essays and introductions. But what about the rest of our critics? Has any of them ever come down with the full weight of literary standards on the work of the kinds of writers under discussion? Does there exist anywhere an essay on one of these writers to set beside Howe's "Philip Roth Reconsidered"?

Recently, two unfavorable notices of minority group fiction did chance to appear—in the October 1983 issue of *Contentions,* the newsletter published by the Committee for the Free World. "Chance" is the correct term inasmuch as the books under review were those selected by the year's prize committees for the Pulitzer Prizes, the American Book Awards, and the National Book Critics Circle Awards. Both the American Book Award for fiction and the Pulitzer Prize went to the first book reviewed: *The Color Purple* by Alice Walker; the second book, *The Women of Brewster Place* by Gloria Naylor, received the American Book Award for a first novel. Both novels are celebrations of black lesbianism, and both make extensive use of profane, vernacular speech. That such nominally daring works are hardly at risk from the prize-giving critical community is well understood, if rarely stated. Thus the awards were nowhere remarked as exceptional, it being obvious to all that they were of what is by now a routine nature.

The two short reviews in *Contentions* hardly resembled Howe on Roth in their severity. They confined themselves to plot summaries followed by brief statements to the effect that, given the absence of literary distinction, the novels were evidently being honored for their disaffected cultural attitudes.[1] These lone dissents, which appeared in a publication of limited private circulation, were quickly seized upon by Alfred Kazin as examples of a "sinister" cultural hegemony. Speaking at a Cooper Union forum in New York City, he treated the reviews as part of "the uniform attack on American books and writers that make the slightest criticism of what has become obviously sacrosanct." Conservative intellectuals have fostered a cultural atmosphere that is "more and more racist," Kazin concluded. He could have offered no better demonstration of the intimidation that had heretofore succeeded in enforcing a critical silence. In the circumstances who can doubt that the silence will be renewed?

Kazin's interest in who exerts cultural hegemony and therefore deserves to be called the Establishment surfaced in a recent discussion at New York's YMHA between Daniel Bell and William Phillips. Bell, like Kazin and Howe, treated neoconservative intellectuals as culturally dominant. Phillips, though sharing Bell's liberalism, felt bound to disagree. He observed that in the universities, it was his experience that liberal opinion does hold the ascendancy. Yet when challenged by Bell to cite the studies that supported his view, Phillips was unable to do so. He apparently did not

[1]For a different view of the literary merits of Alice Walker's *The Color Purple,* see Reid Buckley's review in the November 1983 *American Spectator.* —*Ed.*

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know that numerous articles based on survey research have been published by Seymour Martin Lipset and Everett Ladd detailing the preponderance of liberal opinion in the universities, while Stanley Rothman and S. Robert Lichter have reported similar findings for other intellectual elites: journalists and television news personnel, bureaucrats, and members of public interest groups. Phillips's lack of information called to mind Nathan Glazer's recent comment in the *New York Times Book Review* that the style of New York intellectuals—one set by a now fading older generation—consists in "pronouncing judgments on a basis of less than adequate knowledge in politics and literature."

The debate on what constitutes the Establishment threatens to degenerate into a comic struggle for bottom-dog status. But if each side is able to claim that status with some justice, the explanation is not far to seek. "The conservative outlook seems dominant" to Irving Howe, and the neoconservatives to be "little despots of the media" to Alfred Kazin, because a particular group of intellectuals has managed to make itself the center of intellectual debate. But this is very different from this group's having made inroads in the media, the universities, among government bureaucrats, or among literary critics for that matter—a collection of groups and institutions that may properly be described by that much abused term, "the Establishment."

Thus if Irving Howe was interested in applying his rule that "no one has ever gone very wrong by jabbing at established power," he need have looked no further than the New York State Council for the Humanities that he was addressing. And if his concern was with the cultural consequences of institutional power, he had before him an excellent example in the politicization of prize and fellowship awards by this and similar organizations. For the new writers with whom he is concerned have been grievously imposed upon. Patronized by acts of literary affirmative action, they are being denied the informed criticism that any developing writer stands most in need of. Instead of attacking the assembled bureaucrats, of course, Howe offered them a confirming version of literary history: one that encouraged them to view themselves as establishment antiestablishmentarians.

In a larger context Howe was supplying a justification for extending the political breach between liberals and neoconservatives into culture. The temptation is always great to view art and culture, including political culture, as continuous. Under the old *Partisan Review* separation of the two realms, that temptation was resisted at every turn. Thus one suspects that it was no easy thing for Howe to reduce literature to social terms, given both his place in the old tradition and his innate sensibility. The fact that his talk entirely omitted examples of contemporary books and writers testifies to the suspension of his aesthetic sense. Kazin similarly refrained from saying anything about the two novels whose critics he was attacking.

The politicization of culture by respectable liberals bears directly on their quarrel with neoconservatism. For it settles the question of whether or not the counterculture opposed by both was a passing phenomenon. Certainly the crude impulse of the sixties to turn art into agitprop has passed away, not least because of opposition from Irving Howe and other liberal and radical intellectuals. But it is no great leap from agitprop in the service of radicalism to the social utility of art in the service of democracy as now preached by Howe. The evolution from the one to the other represents a striking triumph of sixties ideas. As for the accompanying antiestablishmentarianism, this represents an equally impressive triumph of that period's style. □

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Cancer or no cancer, doctor or no doctor, I loved smoking much too much to ever stop. But one day, I discovered a secret that turned my burning passion into red-hot hate. A secret that set me free in just 30 minutes flat. *Not a single cigarette in 20 years!*

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If you can lick a stamp, you can lick your cigarette habit just as I—and they—did. I know what it's like to have that compelling urge to light up. And I know what it's like to be able to smilingly pass it by without pangs of yearning.

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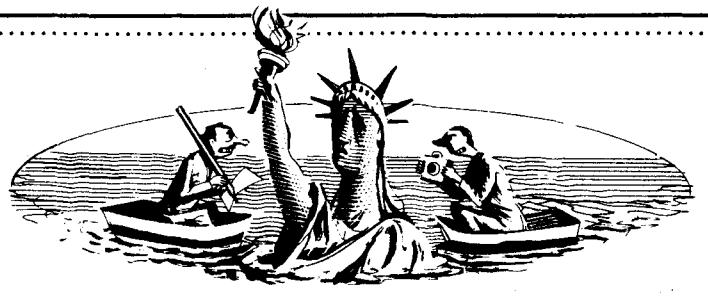


STAND BY YOUR MAN

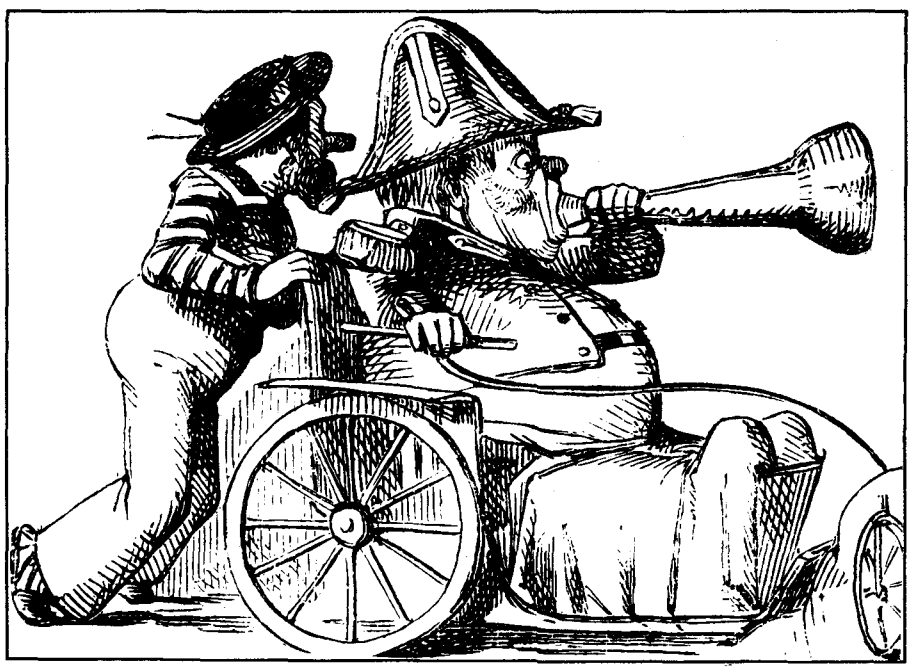
by Fred Barnes

Let's get rid of the silly stuff first. Jody Powell, the press secretary to President Jimmy Carter, thinks that ideological bias among reporters has only the most minimal influence on their coverage. He thinks the press gave Senator Teddy Kennedy a free ride in the 1980 presidential campaign, even on the touchy matter of Chappaquiddick. He thinks that a massive campaign of disinformation by Reagan agents and the leaking of critical national security information by Reagan's sympathizers inside the Carter Administration affected the 1980 election dramatically, particularly because the press neglected to cover either. In fact, Powell seems to think—he doesn't say so explicitly in his reflections on his White House years, *The Other Side of the Story*[1]—that the press snatched a Carter defeat of Reagan from the jaws of victory and a second term for Jimmy.

Sounds bad, huh? Or maybe it's just what you expected from the White House memoirs of a loyal Carter aide. Well, guess again. As defensive and wrongheaded as Powell sometimes is in his new book, more frequently than not he emerges as a trenchant and largely fearless critic of the Washington press corps. He fusses too long over mundane matters, such as whether Hamilton Jordan was treated unfairly by the press in the Amaretto-and-cream episode, but he does tackle some of the weightier questions head on. Has the press taken a never-say-you're-sorry jag that is both dangerous and arrogant? Yes, he says. Does the press police its own malefactors? Not so you'd notice, he says. Is the First Amendment invoked recklessly and reflexively by journalists as a cover for their poor reporting? Is sensationalism rampant? Does the press evade accountability? Yes, yes, and yes.

Powell, now a Washington-based columnist for the *Dallas Times-Herald* and a commentator on ABC-TV, insists that what he calls the "never explain" mode of behavior has engulfed the news business. "For public officials accused of a mistake or worse, refusing to apologize or explain is usually a recipe for disaster, particularly if the accusation is false," he writes. "But there is one powerful institution in our society that still lives by that rather arrogant and amoral precept, lives by it and prospers. It also happens to be the institution that does most of the accusing of everybody and everything else: the fourth estate."

As an egregious example, Powell cites the report on ABC's "World News Tonight" in August 1979 that "U.S. intelligence agencies bugged the residence of UN Ambassador Andrew Young" and this alerted officials to Young's planned meeting with the PLO (a meeting which led to his ouster). The story had been developed by an inexperienced reporter who misinterpreted what officials meant when they confirmed learning of Young's planned meeting from "intelligence sources." The trouble was, these sources didn't include an American bug on Young's apartment. So the story was wrong, Powell says, and had been denied vehemently by Attorney General Benjamin Civileti. Yet ABC went with it. And when Carter himself denied it—and no other news agency picked up the story—ABC continued to broadcast the story. "ABC closed its second evening news story on the bogus bugging by stating enigmatically that its investigation was continuing," Powell says. "That investigation may be the longest in journalistic history. In the more than four years since that night, not one word has ever been mentioned on ABC News about the alleged bugging of Andy Young . . . Indeed, there was apparently no real inclination to check up on their story with a view toward correcting it if it could not be substantiated. Rather the opposite. Frank Reynolds was reported to have said, in explanation of why the story was never retracted, 'I've never been persuaded that the report we gave was in error, therefore there is no need to correct the record.' That, my friends, is one of the more remarkable statements ever uttered by a responsible journalist. The burden of proof, once the story is aired, shifts to the injured party. It is, according to ABC, the responsibility of the government to prove that an event did not occur. This is both a logical impossibility and a complete inversion of the accepted standards of journalism."



One of the nice touches in Powell's book is that he names names. Columnist Jack Anderson, who reported in 1980 that Carter had a plan for a pre-election invasion of Iran, is "dangerously unreliable," he says. Since he left the White House, Powell writes that he found that "this opinion is shared by a large number of the more respected journalists in Washington." But "because of their reluctance to criticize another member of the fourth estate, these opinions are not known by millions of Americans who read Anderson's columns in hundreds of newspapers. That is not proper. If the press feels there is reason to doubt the integrity of a public official, they will make sure that warning is conveyed to their readers and viewers. Isn't there a similar obligation with regard to someone with as much power and influence on public policy as Anderson?"

Where's the accountability? Powell couldn't find it when he was White House press secretary and he can't now. "It is not that editors do not edit or that all reporters are without scruples," he writes. "Far from it. But any careful observer can quickly detect large differences in the amount of editorial scrutiny among news organizations and the fatal weakness is that almost all the checks and constraints are located *within the organization*. The only judge of the performance of the *Washington Post* is the *Washington Post*—or at least the only judge in a position to do much about it. The same is true for CBS News, *Time* magazine, and so on down the list. The process is roughly equivalent to saying, 'Well, I think the President and his chief of staff are decent fellows on the whole; let's forget about this investigative reporting business and trust them to make sure the executive branch does its duty.' We leave the question of right and wrong in the press, unlike other powerful institutions in our society, to the in-

[1]William Morrow, $15.95.

Fred Barnes is National Political Reporter for the Baltimore Sun.

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dividual consciences of reporters and editors. I am a great believer in individual conscience. But one of the things I believe most strongly about it is that it usually is not adequate . . . The fear that mistakes, incompetence, or malice will be discovered and exposed and those responsible will suffer the consequences simply does not exist in journalism to the extent that it should."

In the unkindest cut of all, Powell likens the press to its mortal enemy, the White House. Both have a "tendency to become overly defensive when under attack," he says. "The 'circle the wagons; everyone is out to get us' syndrome in the White House is a generally familiar problem. The 'circle the typewriters; the First Amendment is at stake' phenomenon in the press is at least as common, almost as serious in its consequences, and much less well recognized or understood."

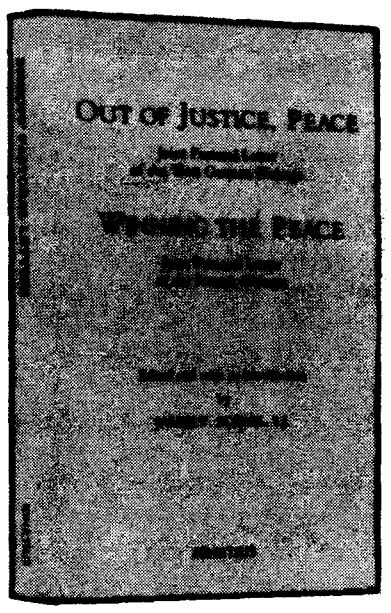
There is a faint echo of another famed press critic in all of this—Spiro Agnew—though you can't expect Powell to claim such sullied parentage. Like Agnew, he finds the soft, vulnerable spots that reporters try to mask or ignore. And like Agnew, he slips into the sort of political paranoia that is peculiar to embattled presidencies. Its hallmark is tortured logic, and some of that lingers with Powell years after the collapse of the Carter Administration. He declares that press bias resulted in far better campaign coverage for both Kennedy and Reagan than for Carter. Kennedy "had among the Washington press corps one of the most loyal and effective claques in existence," Powell asserts. And while reporters treated Carter's statements as those of a conniving politician, they took what Kennedy said "at face value." So liberal reporters liked Kennedy, but how does that explain the soft-hitting treatment of Reagan? Simple. Reporters worried about accusations of unfairness to right-wing candidates and thus "overcompensated for their ideological preferences." If true, the outburst of overcompensation for liberal bias was a historic first. Still, Powell recognizes another reason why Reagan got more kindly coverage than Carter in 1980. Many reporters "personally did not like Carter," he says. "Some now argue that this opinion was justified, but few maintain that it did not exist." Even as savvy and likable a press secretary as Powell couldn't change that.

In his harpooning of Washington reporters—columnist Joseph Kraft, TV correspondents Sam Donaldson and Lesley Stahl, and on and on—Powell naturally needles columnist George Will over his too-close ties to the Reagan campaign four years ago. But he says that Will, once accepted by the Reaganites as a partisan, had to play by their rules. "Under those circumstances I would not have written about the stolen briefing books either," he writes.

Will's involvement with the Reagan crowd, the topic of so much breast-beating by puffed-up reporters last year, becomes all the more trivial and harmless in light of fresh evidence of *engagé* journalism in past presidential campaigns. Most notable is the campaign of Wendell Willkie for the Republican nomination in 1940, now brilliantly chronicled in a new Willkie biography by Steve Neal,[2] a highly regarded political reporter for the *Chicago Tribune*. Indeed, as Neal tells it, there was practically no Willkie campaign at all aside from his support by publisher Henry Luce (*Time, Life, Fortune*), the Cowles brothers (*Look,* the *Des Moines Register,* the *Minneapolis Tribune*) and the *Saturday Evening Post*. "More than anything, it was Willkie's massive and highly favorable exposure in the public prints that made him a national political force."

Russell Davenport, the managing editor of *Fortune,* was Willkie's most fervent advocate. "Using his *Fortune* letterhead and journalistic contacts, Davenport solicited the support of influential editors and political writers. On April 6 [1940], he wrote [columnist] Raymond Clapper: 'The one man in America with the ability and the intellectual and oratorical power to rally these progressive Republican forces is Wendell Willkie. You will, however, go on to point out that Mr. Willkie is not a political reality. Check. But why in the hell don't we make him one?" In his publications, Luce "abandoned any pretense of objective coverage of the Republican contest and portrayed 'Davenport's man' as the defender of U.S. democracy," Neal writes. "*Life* published 11 pages of Willkie puffery in its May 13 issue . . . In an era when national magazines shaped public opinion, Willkie became an instant celebrity, a star. Having the support of *Life, Look,* and the *Saturday Evening Post* was roughly the equivalent of CBS, NBC, and ABC getting together on a candidate in the age of television." Compared to which, Will's transgression is a trifle, if even that. □

[2] *Dark Horse: A Biography of Wendell Willkie* (reviewed in these pages last month by Richard Brookhiser).



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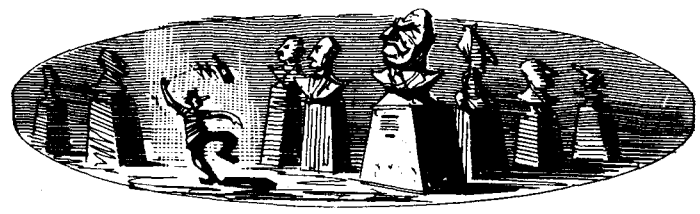

HOW'M I DOIN'?

by William McGurn

Ah! Some love Paris,
And some love Purdue.
But love is an archer with a low I.Q.
A bold, bad bowman, and innocent of pity.
So I'm in love with
New York City.

—Phyllis McGinley
"A Kind of Love Letter to New York"

Few New Yorkers really love their city. Many admire it, some hate it, and most simply tolerate it, but the only truly unifying element among these people is the superiority they exhibit toward the inhabitants of every other American city. Belief does not come easily for them, and so there are many more "I love New York" bumperstickers on the Jersey Turnpike than on Fifth Avenue. New Yorkers know that for every rose there are a dozen thorns, for every Brooklyn Heights a Bedford Stuyvesant, for every Broadway theater a 42nd Street porno shop. Whatever Walter Mondale might promise to the contrary, we can't all live on Park Avenue. *Somebody* has to live in Queens.

City inhabitants accept imperfections and consequently are baffled by what they see as the relatively minor concerns that occupy the citizens of other American metropolises. When Chicago's Richard Daley was alive, for example, the fulminations by columnists like Mike Royko about the Daley regime's lack of virtue were incomprehensible to New Yorkers. In Chicago the streets were clean and the Mayor's friends got rich. In New York the people knew that the streets were filthy and the Mayor's friends still got rich.

So in what has become known as the city that refuses to work, the political life takes place under a cloud of cynicism. At the moment, Schools Chancellor Anthony Alvarado is being investigated for irregular loans and questionable practices. The people yawn. Not only do they expect corruption they would, if it helped, favor it. Indeed, they have over the century voted for it in most of its forms: the raw corruption of Tammany Hall and the genial corruption of Jimmy Walker; more recently, the patrician corruption of John Lindsay and the inept corruption of Abraham Beame.

By 1976, however, the latest corruption—whose chief trait was the inability to draw the line on anything—had drawn the city close to bankruptcy. Around the country there was little sympathy and an oft-expressed sense that New York was finally paying the price of its haughtiness (remember the *Daily News* headline that cost Gerald Ford the 1976 election: "Ford to City: Drop Dead"). By the time of the 1977 mayoral elections, New York City was some $1 billion in the hole.

Enter Edward I. Koch. Born in 1924 in the Bronx, this the 105th Mayor of New York has spent his life in politics, starting in 1952 when he went about Sheridan Square with his soapbox and American flag proselytizing for Adlai Stevenson. After joining a reform group known as the Village Independent Democrats, Koch subsequently won election as a state assemblyman, a city councilman, and, in 1968, as the U.S. representative from New York's 17th congressional district. For years he was also something of a local celebrity, regularly appearing on Channel 5 (WOR-TV) to debate the conservative Dr. Martin Abend, who lately has been reduced to debating college professors.

If anyone can love a beast as diverse as New York, Ed Koch is the man. The son of Polish-Jewish immigrants, he revels in it. "Isn't it nice that Chinatown is mostly Chinese, and Little Italy mostly Italian?" he asked Barbara Walters on ABC-TV's "20/20." Though he was re-elected in 1981 with a phenomenal 75 percent of the vote, his is a popularity of recent vintage, one that wasn't there his first time around and grows each time he steps in front of the mike. In his recent book, *Mayor,*[1] New York's chief executive has outraged his enemies and delighted his fans by combining a shrewd look at city politics with his peculiar brand of invective, answering his own favorite question, "How'm I doin'?"

The story of the book itself deserves some mention. Featuring a cover of the balding Koch with his arms outstretched before a background view of Manhattan, it was originally scheduled for a modest April release. But after a front-page story in the *Village Voice* attacked it in January, the book was rushed into print six weeks early. Based on an early copy of the galleys, the *Voice*'s review essentially lambasted the Mayor for being mean to other politicians. That was promotion of a kind Koch couldn't have bought, and by February 26 *Mayor* was number one on the *New York Times* best-seller list. "He understands the value of publicity," Simon and Schuster's Julia Knickerbocker told *Publishers Weekly,* in what must rank as one of the great understatements.

Mayor is subtitled "An Autobiography," and however far it strays it is never too far from the hero. Koch makes much over the advice given him by his colleagues not to publish the book while he was still in office, which obviously has added to his pleasure in doing so. It is not hard to see why they demurred. Governor Mario Cuomo is blamed in no uncertain terms for the rumors of Koch's homosexuality and the failure to act against the "Vote for Cuomo Not the Homo" flyers that surfaced during both the 1977 mayoral and 1982 gubernatorial primaries. Jimmy Carter makes Uriah Heep seem noble. Governor Hugh Carey appears a boob. Reagan, Koch concedes magnanimously, is definitely "not dumb." When it comes to local city politicians like Herman Badillo, Koch is often rougher. Nevertheless, the comments are almost always perceptive as well.

Politically, Koch is now, and always has been, a liberal. He is not now, nor has he ever been, a fanatic. At a time when the largest chunk of his party has succumbed to the far Left, Koch has remained a Stevenson Democrat from the Village. He is for the death penalty, and abortion. He believes in the free market.[2] He has no illusions about Communism, and endorsed President Reagan's invasion of Grenada. He has always been an outspoken proponent of civil rights for blacks, but has never favored racial quotas.

The result of staying in the center is that Koch today appears to be on the far right of his party (in the recent gubernatorial primary, Cuomo

[1]Simon and Schuster, $17.95.

William McGurn is managing editor of This World *magazine and contributing editor of* The American Spectator.

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accused Koch of being a Reagan clone). For all the maneuvering, though, most of it comes down to just plain politics. According to Koch, he courted the Republican endorsement in the 1981 election (he ran on both tickets) as a kind of "insurance policy" because he knew he would not necessarily win the Democratic primary. Primary voters traditionally tend to be closer to the fringes, and Koch says he always expected an attack from within his own party: "The radicals don't like me," writes Koch. "And they have good reason, because I despise them."

Mayor is full of such provocations, and predictably that is what has captured the most attention (not to mention sold the most books). Yet there is meat as well. Though there is no danger of *Mayor*'s ever being confused with either *The Last Hurrah* or the Kissinger memoirs, it does present some fascinating lessons in modern civics. The best is Koch's account of the 1980 subway and bus strike, when the 33,000 members of the Transport Workers Union went out for what was to be 11 days.

In sharp contrast to Mayor John Lindsay, who during the last strike in 1966 had told people to stay home except for emergencies, Koch took on the unions squarely. He forbade municipal employees to stay home, and boasted that 88 percent of those employed in the city were getting to their jobs. During the strike, Koch went out to the Brooklyn, Williamsburg, and 59th Street Bridges to urge the walking commuters on, likening them to "the Russian Army coming over frozen Lake Ladoga to save Leningrad." Most of the commuters told him to stand tough, and Koch got reams of publicity when he began referring to those who badgered him as "wackos."

Nevertheless, Koch knew the strike was no joke. Although the state had overall financial authority for the MTA (Metropolitan Transit Authority), and every wage increase of one percent cost the state some $10 million, the liability of the city—whose more than 200,000 municipal workers would demand roughly the same raise—was $53 million. Koch insisted on the firm line because the city literally could not afford to give in. "I really can't understand why everyone takes for granted that the City has to love every strike," he told his aides at the beginning. "Why can't we prevail?"

The reason they took it for granted was that they knew city history. On paper the Taylor law made public strikes illegal, yet past settlements had included either amnesty from its penalties or hidden benefits that in effect paid the fines: The law had no teeth. Then, too, Governor Carey was pressuring MTA chief Richard Ravitch not to enforce the Taylor law at the same time Koch, who had no direct authority in the MTA, was lobbying for full penalties. When Ravitch near the end favored giving in, Koch pointed out that the city's position was actually getting stronger: The people were on the city's side. In the end, when the MTA board voted against Koch for the final settlement, the Mayor quickly turned to the TV cameras with cries of a sellout.

There are other, equally informing sections in *Mayor*, such as on the decision to close Sydenham Hospital in Harlem, which outraged the black community. Another chunk is on how

[2]Here are Koch's own words, strange from the mouth of a big-city Democrat these days. "I am a capitalist in the sense that I believe in the capitalist economy," he writes. "I believe it is in the interest of the United States that companies go in and out of business. If they are successful they stay. If they are not they fail. That is what has made our economy stronger than the socialist or communist economies. I said it with Lockheed and I lost and I said it with Chrysler and I lost. If you want to bloat the economy just take the element of competition out of it."

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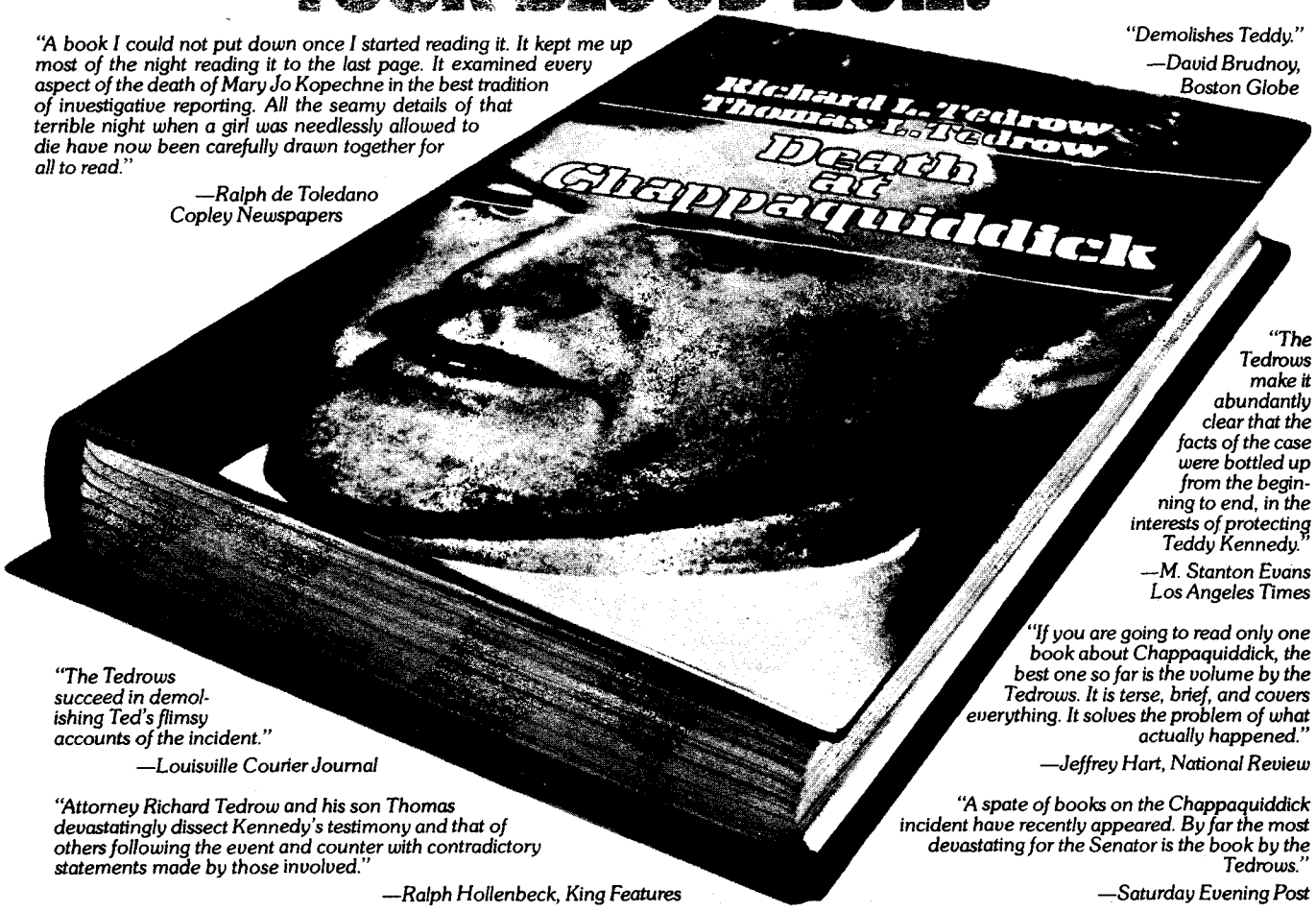

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he cut the deal for federal aid to the city, and still another is devoted to the practical reasons behind the Mayor's cooperation with the Republicans. Throughout it all the Mayor remains the central figure, a Dostoyevskian character who sees slights in every gesture and doesn't hesitate to write about them. In fact, most of the local press was sucked into unconsciously promoting his book when he distributed the juiciest of these sections first.

As with even the breeziest of Wordsworth's sonnets, however, Koch's ostensibly flippant words are invariably calculated, designed to appeal to his growing constituency of aggrieved taxpayers. The typical New Yorker, like the Mayor, is mad at being ripped off, depressed at the squalor of the subways he takes to work, annoyed with the haughtiness of well-paid municipal hacks. Koch's slights are their slights. So every time he lashes out at some poor schnook, those frustrated taxpayers experience that vicarious thrill of telling the boss off, saying the unsayable. We might recall the anecdote Koch delivered to the 1980 Democratic National Convention:

I went up to a Bronx senior center and told two hundred senior citizens: "A judge I helped elect was mugged recently. And do you know what he did? He called a press conference and said, 'This mugging of me will in no way affect my decisions in matters of this kind.' And an elderly lady got up in the back of the room and said, 'Then mug him again.' "

This theatrical flair Koch lends to common sense is the Mayor at his best. By refusing to argue on his opponents' terms, Koch turns potential disasters into political points. At a town-hall meeting in East Flatbush, for example, a black teenager charged the Mayor with not doing anything for the black community. After first pointing out that over 56 percent of the city's budget—almost $7 billion—went to the poor, the Mayor went on the offensive:

We've got to provide for the poorest of the poor, and we're going to, but I want to tell you what you have to know is: there are demagogues and ideologues who don't give a damn about the middle class. I speak out for the middle class. You know why? Because they pay the taxes; they provide the jobs for the poor people, and we're not able to do as much for them economically as I would like, but at the very least, I'm gonna recognize the sacrifices they make. What's your next question?

The entire meeting was taped by WNYC, the city's municipal radio station. Does anyone think the Mayor went to East Flatbush without having this little speech somewhere in the back of his mind?

For all this, there are still those who cannot understand Koch's (or, for that matter, Reagan's) appeal. They see it as luck, a sham that clever people (like themselves) see through. But like many clever people, they have blinded themselves to the obvious. For one thing, Ed Koch—whatever one might think of his policies—is personally an exceptionally honest man; consequently he is difficult to pressure. For another, there is the blatant fact the Left hates to acknowledge about *anyone's* success: Koch works twice as hard as anyone else (without spouse or child, there is no family to neglect). Last, he is always campaigning, as a good Mayor should: Let a building collapse or a major disaster occur, and the Mayor will be there in a hardhat; a fireman or cop gets killed or injured, there will be Ed Koch at the funeral or hospital—and, of course, on the evening news.

Take parades. Koch goes to all of them, not just the biggies. So this March 18 it was no surprise to find the *New York Times* featuring a terrific picture of an ebullient Mayor, sporting his bulky Aran sweater, waving to the

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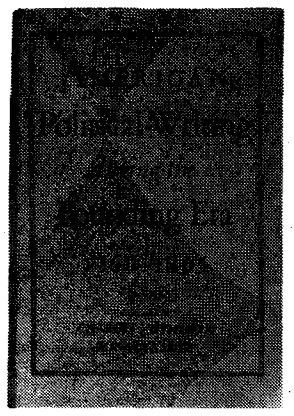

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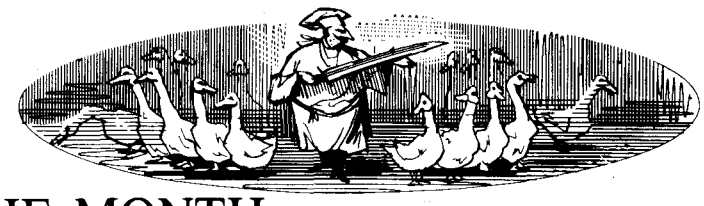
St. Patrick's Day crowds. The very next day, however, *Times* readers might have thought they were seeing the *same* picture—until a glance at the caption explained that here was Koch (sans the fisherman sweater) marching in the Purim parade, commemorating the saving of the Jews from annihilation by Haman in the Persian-Medean Empire. Unlike Nelson Rockefeller, who would consider himself above such exuberance,[3] Ed Koch is an unabashed cheerleader; if he were a mayor somewhere in Iowa, I imagine we would see him running about in suspenders, promoting the local 4-H fair.

Yet symbols without substance are doomed to backfire. Beame could have camped out at the Brooklyn Bridge and people would only have spit at him. Koch is the people's mayor, because he is smart enough not to tell them things are getting better when all their five senses tell them things are getting worse. When he senses he has an implacable enemy, he baits him, hoping at least that way to gain some mileage from it. And if the occasion warrants, he steals his critics' thunder by admitting he was wrong.

When Edward I. Koch was sworn in on January 1, 1978, New York City was $1 billion in the red; with this year's budget he reported a $500 million surplus. Clearly, as Koch now says frequently, he must be doing *something* right. Still, the political graves are full of competent men who never achieved popularity; Koch is that rare man who has both. Perhaps the best explanation lies in the early pages of his first chapter. "If you know how to use a heckler," writes the Mayor, "he can be very good for you." The wackos have yet to figure this out. □

[3]Compare Koch against the old legend about Bobby Kennedy who, while campaigning in an Italian neighborhood, allegedly horrified aides by asking for a knife and fork when he was given a slice of pizza to bite into.

THE PUBLIC POLICY



CANCER SCARE OF THE MONTH

by William R. Havender

We have just gone through another cancer scare, this time over the grain fumigant, ethylene dibromide, or EDB. The scare goes back to 1975 when EDB was first discovered to be a potent carcinogen in rats and mice, leading the Environmental Defense Fund to petition the Environmental Protection Agency to take action. With the discovery last year that EDB was contaminating ground water in Florida (from use as a soil fumigant), the issue became hotter, causing Florida agricultural commissioner Doyle Conner to suspend the sale of all food products containing EDB. Other states soon followed Florida's lead, and the environmentalists and media did their part. Finally, on February 3 of this year, EPA Administrator William D. Ruckelshaus made the scare official: He ordered an immediate ban on EDB's use in fumigating stored grain and milling machinery, set temporary tolerance levels of EDB for food already in the pipeline (e.g., 30 parts per billion in bread, 150 ppb in flour and cake mixes), and then in early March announced that the only remaining agricultural use of EDB—the fumigation of fruit to kill fruit flies—would be permanently banned starting this fall.

"Decide in haste, repent at leisure" goes an old saw that has proved uncannily apt in evaluating previous regulatory decisions.[1] Four questions might be raised to determine whether it is similarly apt in describing Mr. Ruckelshaus's decision to order a nationwide ban of EDB.

1. *What degree of hazard did EDB pose to the public?*

EDB has been found to be highly carcinogenic in ten long-term, high-dose tests on rats and mice of both sexes, and involving exposure by either inhalation or stomach tube. In addition, a skin painting test has been conducted on mice with positive results. No one disputes that EDB is reliably carcinogenic under these conditions, nor that, as pesticides go, it is among the more potently carcinogenic. What *is* disputed is whether consumers face any significant risk from the incredibly tiny levels of EDB typically present in foods. According to EPA estimates given in its "Position Document No. 4" (hereafter PD4), the average person ingests about ten micrograms of EDB a day (by comparison, the average person ingests 140,000 micrograms of pepper a day). This amount is more than 250,000 times smaller, on a bodyweight basis, than the cancer-causing doses given to test animals. In other words, you would have to consume about 400 tons of food daily to receive the doses of EDB the rats got.

Another source of confusion has been the EPA's estimate in PD4 that lifetime exposure to EDB at typical levels in the diet could lead to an increase in lifetime cancer risk of 3 per 1000 people. What has not been so well publicized is that the equation relating animal and human risks used to derive this figure was only recently cooked up by the EPA's own Carcinogen Assessment Group, and has yet to be subjected to outside peer review. This level of risk, moreover, is inconsistent with extant data on workers exposed to EDB levels five to ten thousand times greater than typical consumers over long periods. (In fact, no excess cancer has been seen among these workers, though over half should have died of cancer were the EPA's estimate valid.) Also, the assumptions underlying this estimate would lead to grossly unrealistic predictions of risk for other dietary carcinogenic hazards, such as aflatoxin.[2] Finally, PD4 reveals that

William R. Havender is an independent consultant on environmental carcinogens who lives in Berkeley, California.

[1]See my article "Science vs. Politics in Regulatory Washington," *The American Spectator,* June 1983.

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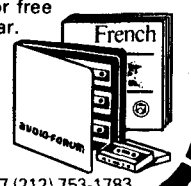

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the EPA increased its estimate of the typical daily intake of EDB by some 400-fold between 1980 and 1983. The sole basis for this re-evaluation is an analysis of biscuits made from 22 flour samples that were supposedly "geographically representative of cities throughout the continental U.S." More extensive sampling, however, involving thousands of foods tested across the country, has shown this estimate to be too large by at least a factor of ten.

Taken together, these considerations show that the 3 per 1000 risk estimate should be reduced by at least 100-fold—one factor of ten because EDB's estimated potency in humans is incompatible with the data we have on workers, and another factor of ten because, as the EPA now quietly concedes, consumer intake is at least ten times less than the ten micrograms per person per day previously believed.

2. *Do we need the service performed by EDB?*

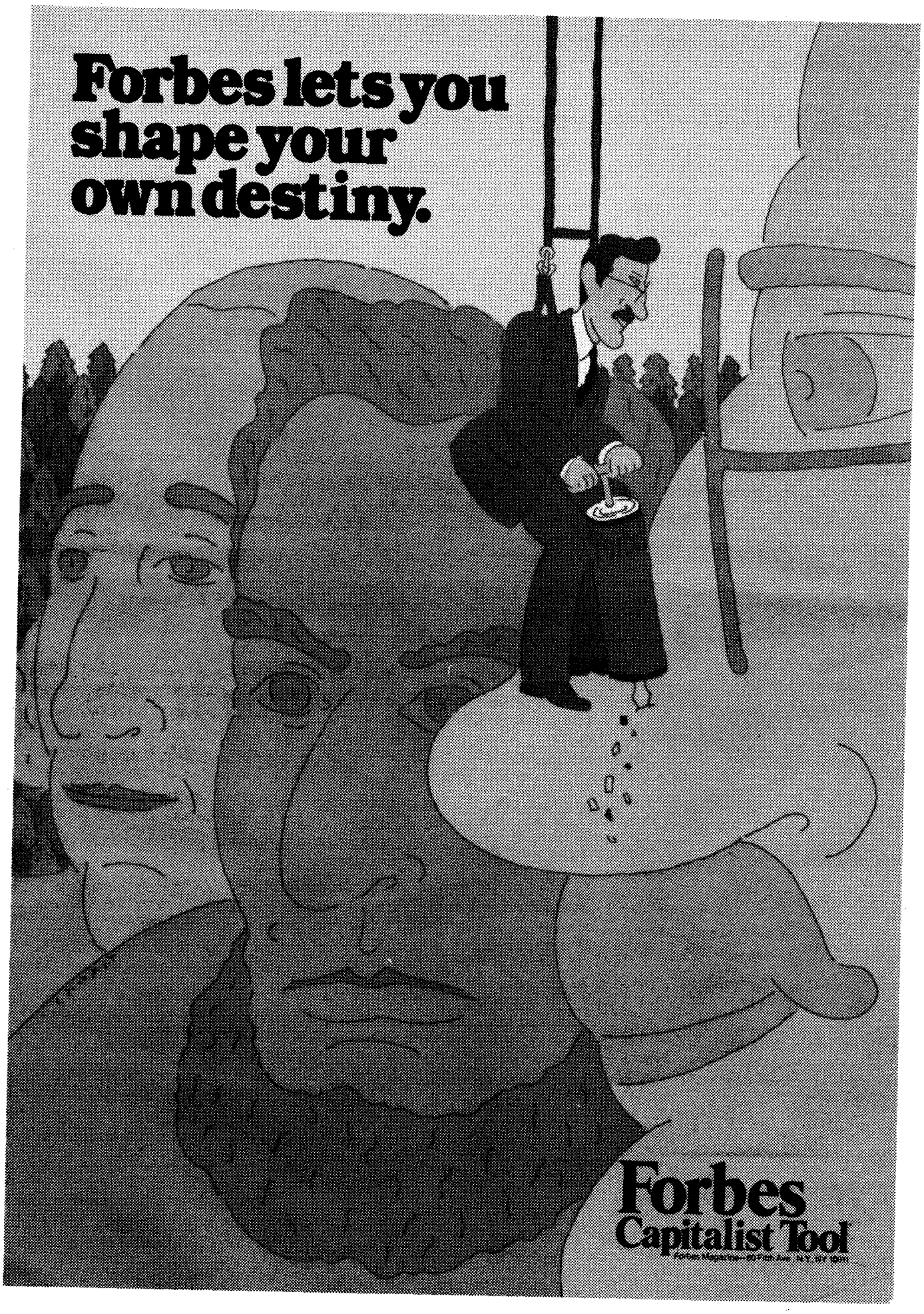
Yes. Grain storage is a necessity not only between harvests but also in case of drought (as in 1983). Grain beetles are voracious and multiply incredibly fast (hatchling to sexually mature adult in four weeks). If uncontrolled, their growth would be explosive. Moreover, they are ideal carriers of bacterial and mold contamination (including the mold that produces aflatoxin). By chewing through the coat protecting the seed, they bring spores directly into contact with the nutritive part of the grain. Moreover, their activity leads to the release of moisture stored within the kernel, raising the atmospheric humidity in grain bins and thereby furthering mold growth. What the bugs don't eat themselves can therefore be rendered unfit for consumption by humans. Control of these insects by one method or another is thus essential.

Treatment of milling machinery against insects is also necessary to prevent the eggs, which are as fine as flour and pass right through the milling process, from getting into products and germinating on supermarket and kitchen shelves.

3. *Do we have safe alternatives to EDB?*

No. Only three other effective substances are currently registered for use on grain, namely: methyl bromide, phosphine, and a 4:1 mixture of carbon tetrachloride and carbon disulfide. Are any of these carcinogenic? At the time of Mr. Ruckelshaus's announcement in February, cancer test results on methyl bromide were not yet available, but they were reported later that month. The verdict: Methyl bromide is a strong carcinogen, fully as potent as EDB. Concerning phosphine, no long-term, high-dose animal cancer test has yet been performed. Even if such a test were to begin today, it would take three years before we could state with confidence that phosphine is not a carcinogen. As for the third alternative, the major component of that mixture, carbon tetrachloride, is a proven carcinogen and is already under review at the EPA with a ban on its use possible in the near future. The minor component, carbon disulfide, is currently being tested by the National Toxicology Program, with results not expected before two years.

In short, none of the available alternatives which we are now obliged to use as a result of Mr. Ruckelshaus's



[2]Aflatoxin, a naturally occurring mold contaminant in many nut- and grain-based foods (such as peanut butter), is 1000 times more potent as a carcinogen than EDB. It is allowed in foods at levels up to 20 ppb. Clearly, aflatoxin at 20 ppb poses a much greater carcinogenic risk than EDB does at 30 ppb, and were an analogous risk equation applied to aflatoxin, the number generated would not be three but some *hundreds* of excess cancer cases per 1000 exposed people—a figure that would swamp all other known causes of cancer, including smoking.

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emergency ban on EDB has yet been given a clean bill of health in the same sort of rigorous animal tests that revealed EDB's potency as a carcinogen. Moreover, there is evidence that these alternatives substantially increase the toxic risk to workers who apply them. Both phosphine and methyl bromide are more poisonous than EDB: In fact, all uses of phosphine are classified as "restricted" by the EPA (i.e., only certified applicators may work with it) as are most uses of methyl bromide. In contrast EDB use was never "restricted" in grain and fruit fumigation. Methyl bromide is particularly insidious: Under normal working concentrations it is odorless and thus can cause lasting central nervous system damage before it is detected. But at least it is flame retardant (as is EDB). Phosphine, on the other hand, is highly flammable, not a comforting thought to anyone using it in the presence of grain dust, which is highly explosive.

EDB has a further advantage. Because of its mixture of gaseousness and toxicity, only EDB is conducive to "spot" (i.e., local) fumigation of milling machinery wherein a few gallons are injected through special ports directly into the machinery, with toxic concentrations reaching the insects before the gas dissipates. Methyl bromide and phosphine, in contrast, are much more volatile (i.e., gaseous) and thus dissipate before the bugs are killed. These substitutes can only be effective, according to the EPA and other sources, if the whole mill is closed off and fumigated, a process that not only is less efficient, but also substantially increases the risk of worker exposure.

4. *Could Mr. Ruckelshaus have made a better decision?*

Yes. A striking outcome of the extensive food sampling done in the wake of Florida's ban has been the revelation that products with high levels of EDB are very rare, even in the absence of any conscious effort by industry to reduce these levels (no tolerance levels for EDB in food had ever been set prior to Mr. Ruckelshaus's February 3 decision). Specifically, some 99 percent of all food products currently on supermarket shelves *already* complied with Mr. Ruckelshaus's temporary standards. The few products found to contain inordinate levels of EDB were clearly anomalous, the result of accidents or negligence rather than intractable technical difficulties. Relatively simple measures such as monitoring EDB levels, aerating grain, and blending high-EDB grain with low-EDB grain would have sufficed to eliminate these few instances of excessive contamination.

Rather than ban all grain-related uses of EDB, then, it would have been enough for Mr. Ruckelshaus to set sensible limits on EDB levels permissible in consumer products. Indeed, his temporary levels are quite sensible, and could well have been made permanent. This would have provided adequate public protection while causing minimal disruption in existing patterns of food production and distribution.

But of course we know that Mr. Ruckelshaus was not operating in a calm and rational world. He was operating in the apocalyptic world described by Edith Efron in these pages last March and in her brilliant new book, *The Apocalyptics*. Although Efron absolves the media of ultimate responsibility in concocting the cancer scare syndrome—she gives that honor to the American science establishment—the national media did play a major role in heightening the EDB scare and in forcing Mr. Ruckelshaus's ban. The six-week media life of this flap saw plenty of drama and sensation, but little if any effort to ask the tough questions. The sample of corn muffin mix found in California containing EDB at 5400 ppb was flashed across the nation, but not news of the extreme rarity of products with such levels. No editorials questioned the 3 per 1000 excess-cases-of-cancer figure, despite the fact that PD4, a publicly available document, states in non-technical English that this estimate was based on only 22 biscuit samples. None uncovered the fact that this risk figure was refuted by published studies on workers. None has yet publicized the fact that the EPA has now lowered this figure by more than tenfold. (Undoubtedly, you're reading it here for the first time.) Horror stories of painful deaths from EDB in industrial accidents were publicized, but not how seldom these occurred, nor how much more often they occur with EDB's replacements. Environmental advocates enjoyed ready access to the print and broadcast media, and used it to distort the hazards of EDB and advocate a ban.

When "debates" were staged, there was the media's anti-industry bias to contend with. I participated in four such debates, and with one exception the moderator always lowered his guard. On "Nightline" Ted Koppel introduced EDB critic Samuel Epstein as "Professor of Environmental Medicine at the University of Illinois"; when it came my turn he ignored my professional affiliations and academic credentials (which I had carefully communicated to his producer) and introduced me as "an industry consultant."[3] A "debate" on WOR, a New York City radio station, turned out to be a lengthy interview with representatives of the EPA and the National Resources Defense Council, with only a single question to me on the hazards of EDB. After my brief reply the NRDC representative responded by insinuating that I must be in the pay of the Grocery Manufacturers Association, since I sounded just like them, whereupon the moderator closed the debate.

There were some notable exceptions. Charlayne Hunter-Gault of "The MacNeil-Lehrer Report" was a model of impartiality. Tom Vacar of San Francisco's KGO-TV and the *Wall Street Journal* gave solid coverage to the cancer and workplace hazards of EDB replacements, and also attempted to put EDB risks into perspective. (EDB, for example, presents an even smaller carcinogenic hazard than saccharin because saccharin, while a weaker carcinogen than EDB, is present in much larger amounts.)

Still, it is with the EPA that ultimate responsibility must lie. In its public statements, the agency should have pointed out the weaknesses of its risk estimation procedures and hence of its risk estimate. It should have promptly informed the public that the amount of EDB being found in the nation's diet was at least ten times smaller than previously believed, rather than waiting until after Mr. Ruckelshaus's decision was made to release this information. It should have been candid in revealing that EDB's replacements are potentially more hazardous to the public and workers, and that we lack crucial data on the carcinogenicity of certain of these chemicals. But it did none of these, and so we've gone through yet another episode in which poor science has motivated a hasty and misguided regulatory decision. □

[3]Sad to relate, I am not now, nor have I ever been, in the pay of either a food or chemical firm. In fact, I am at least $700 in the hole for all the long distance calls I made in investigating the EDB issue, and even received a call from an outraged representative of the peanut industry objecting to my remarks on "Nightline" about the hazards of aflatoxin in peanut butter. Some "industry consultant"!

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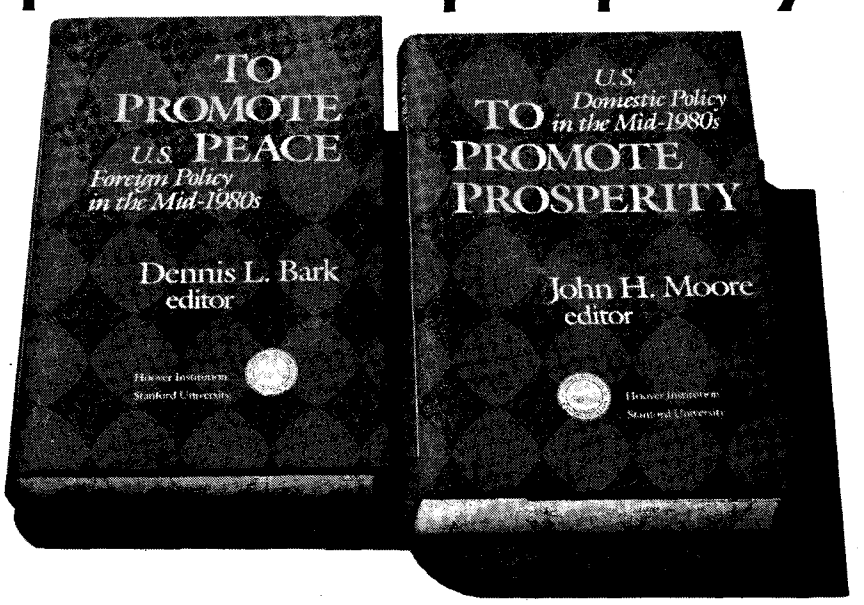

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BOOK REVIEWS

THE AENEID

Virgil, translated by Robert Fitzgerald/Random House/$20.00

Susan Scheinberg

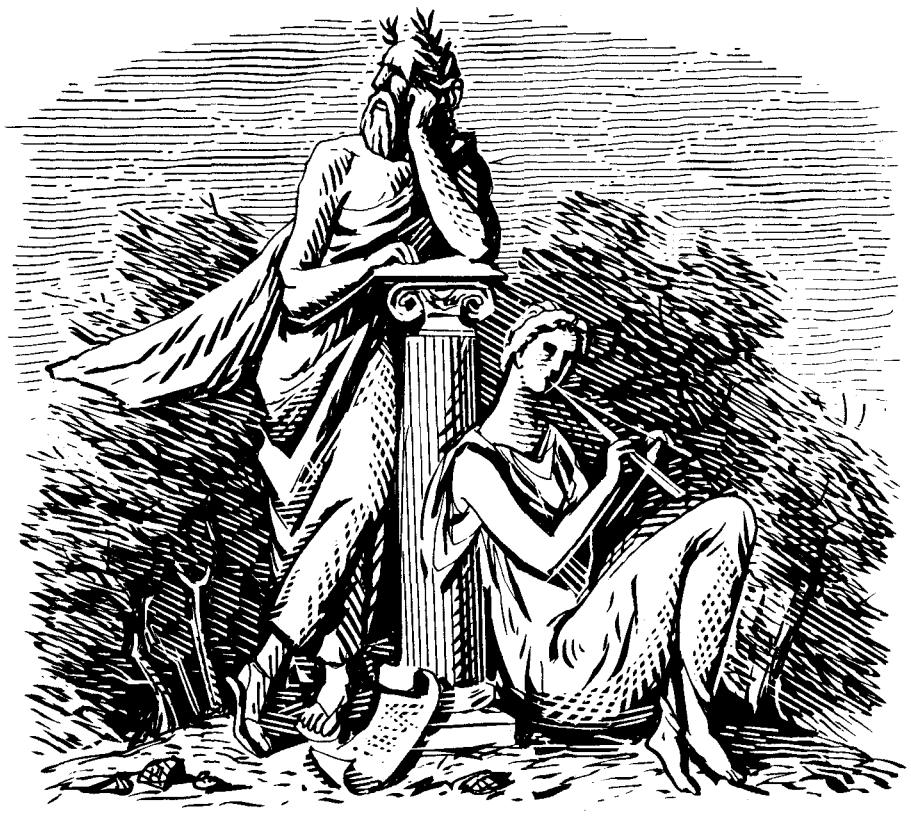
Recently the wife of an eminent classicist confided to me, in utmost secrecy, that she had never read the *Aeneid.* Though I affected shock, I was not surprised, for the *Aeneid* is likely to be one of those books we all keep meaning to read each summer, along with *War and Peace, Paradise Lost,* and other weighty texts that never seem to fit into the beach bag of good intentions. Now the publication of a new translation of the *Aeneid* by Robert Fitzgerald has provided the classicist's wife, and others like her, with an ideal opportunity to read Virgil's poem. She may carry this handsome volume to any gathering of literati and deflect potential embarrassment with a modest smile: "Oh, I'm just comparing it with the Dryden translation."

Or is the *Aeneid* so little read that the classicist's wife need feel no embarrassment? Even though more of us have studied Latin than Greek, we are far more likely to dip into Homer or Sophocles, when in search of ancient wisdom, than Virgil. Why is this? In addition to its exotic charm, Greek literature has a liveliness and an immediacy that allow it, even when read in translation, to delight and move us. The Romans, by contrast, valued *gravitas,* seriousness of purpose. The weightiness that characterizes Roman literary efforts seems to make them particularly ill-suited to current tastes. Thus, given a choice between "the glory that was Greece" and "the grandeur that was Rome," most will choose the glory. Grandeur has not been stylish for some time now, and it does not seem to be one of the new ideas for the eighties either.

And yet the neglect of the *Aeneid* is a pity, because the poem has much to say to the citizens of a powerful nation. Homer's epics tell the story of brilliant, proud warriors seeking personal honor and renown. The *Aeneid,* in contrast, although it declares its vast debt to Homer in its first words, "Arms and a man," presents a new heroic ethic. In telling of Aeneas' struggle to found a new city from the seeds of an older world, Virgil shows us the virtues requisite to a ruling people. The fierce heroes of the Homeric world could have no part in the Roman mission, stated in a famous passage in Book Six: "To pacify, to impose the rule of law,/To spare the conquered, battle down the proud." The human desire for individual fame had to be redirected towards national glory. And so the *Aeneid* ends with the death of Aeneas' Italian opponent Turnus, the closest approximation in Virgil to a Homeric hero.

The *Aeneid* thus celebrates Roman achievements; but if the emperor Augustus "commissioned" it, this poem can scarcely be what he had in mind. For one of the remarkable features of the epic is its melancholy insistence on the personal costs of imperial glory. Again and again Aeneas is forced to relinquish beloved people and places and to witness the death of brave young warriors. Even the future glory of his progeny cannot fully repay him for his sorrows. He carries a shield arrayed with scenes of "the fame and destinies of his descendants," but, as Virgil remarks, Aeneas does not know what these pictures mean. *Tantae molis erat*—"so hard and huge/A task it was to found the Roman people" (Fitzgerald's rendition): but was it worthwhile?

As with other literary masterpieces, no age can resist using the *Aeneid* as a mirror of its own concerns. If past generations of scholars were deaf to what a recent critic has called the "private voice" of the *Aeneid,* in the last twenty years the mainstream of Virgilian interpretation in America has gone to the opposite extreme. For many modern exegetes Aeneas has become an unfeeling villain rather than a noble exemplar of fortitude, and Virgil a disillusioned opponent of the Augustan regime rather than its poet laureate. Such an attitude was fostered by the fashion of debunking heroes, as well as more specific opposition to the Vietnam war in academic circles, but it is interesting to note that it is not entirely new. Already in 1927 an American scholar had occasion to lament the devaluation among his contemporaries of Aeneas' "sterner, more austere, and less picturesque virtues of self-control and devotion to ideas of rectitude." Such virtues, he complained, could not be appreciated by an age espousing "extreme toleration of all self-expression, however abnormal or pathologic." Have times changed? The American love of the underdog and outsider makes it difficult for us to side wholeheartedly with the victors in any battle. And in this reluctance we do no injustice to the poet of the *Aeneid,* who predicts the transformation of a defeated people, the Trojans, into the "lords of the world." Paradoxically, had Virgil's prediction been less accurate and Rome less successful, we might today be more prepared to admire the hero of his epic.



And now what of Fitzgerald's translation? Can any translator hope to convey the *Aeneid*'s complex and elusive layers of meaning, expressed in vivid sounds and memorable images? The extraordinarily compact nature of the Latin language compounds the problem. As Winston Churchill, who confessed himself unable to learn Latin despite years of schooling, observes in his autobiography: "In a sensible language like English important words are connected and related to one another by other little words. The Romans in that stern antiquity considered such a method weak and unworthy." In Latin, unlike English, he continues, "the sentence fits together like a piece of polished machinery. Every phrase can be tensely charged with meaning." The challenge to the translator is thus to reproduce the power and precision of Latin expression while remaining faithful to the meaning of the text.

John Dryden, in the preface to his translation of the *Aeneid,* writes that his aim was "to make Virgil speak such English as he would himself have spoken, if he had been born in England, and in this present age." This implies the need for constant retranslation of great works of poetry. But since the epic is not currently a thriving genre of poetry in America, the question of how Virgil would have written if he were living among us, with a grant from NEH, becomes somewhat perplexing. Fitzgerald's solution is to write in blank verse, rendered more formal by the capitalization of each

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line, and to incorporate archaic and unusual vocabulary: rondure, kirtled, godling, lucent, leafage, coracle, jargoning, windrows, scabrous. Such words appear just often enough to remind the reader of the antiquity and dignity of the poetry. Fitzgerald's taste and restraint in using this approach make him succeed where less judicious men have failed; I have in mind the hapless nineteenth-century translator of Homer whom Matthew Arnold ridiculed for writing lines like "Between the outwork of thy teeth what word hath split?"

The finest quality of Fitzgerald's translation, in fact, is its dignity. Although he is not as literal a translator as Allen Mandelbaum, whose version currently holds sway in college humanities courses, his slightly unexpected turns of phrase better convey the strength and beauty of Virgil's hexameters. Mandelbaum's poetry often reads like prose arbitrarily divided into lines of verse, whereas in reading Fitzgerald one can never escape the sense that one is reading an epic poem. By means of minor departures from the Latin text Fitzgerald often preserves poetic devices like alliteration, and generally retains the flavor of the epic better than the slower and limper phrases of Mandelbaum.

One example must suffice. Among the most moving episodes in the *Aeneid* is the death of the aged King Priam, impiously slain at the altar before the eyes of his family by the savage son of Achilles. As Aeneas concludes the narration of this deed, he steps back from the immediate action to reflect on the vanity of human pride. Fitzgerald renders this:

> That was the end
> Of Priam's age, the doom that took him off,
> With Troy in flames before his eyes, his towers
> Headlong fallen—he that in other days
> Had ruled in pride so many lands and peoples,
> The power of Asia.
> On the distant shore
> The vast trunk headless lies without a name.

Mandelbaum, by contrast, is more faithful to the final line and a half of the Latin:

> Now he lies along the shore, a giant trunk, his head torn from his shoulders, as a corpse without a name.

But Mandelbaum's awkward line divisions detract from the power of the words, and the increased accuracy is more than offset by the loss of verbal compression. Fitzgerald, on the other hand, has added the word "distant" and failed to translate the Latin words for "corpse" and "torn from his shoulders." Yet in so doing he has eloquently captured the concise pathos of our final glimpse of Priam.

Fitzgerald's departures from the text are always slight, and because of the difficulty of translating Virgilian Latin they seem less intrusive than the licenses he takes in his popular versions of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. But some flaws do mar his impressive accomplishment. One of the themes of the poem is duty to family and gods, expressed repeatedly by the noun *pietas* and Aeneas' epithet *pius*. In Fitzgerald's rendition, *pius* Aeneas is variously "devout," "grave," "duty-bound," "god-fearing," "dedicated," "zealous," or "the man of honor." It is therefore possible to read the Fitzgerald translation without fully grasping the centrality of this theme. Why the struggle to avoid the repetition Virgil has intended? This free approach to translating hinders the reader's ability to trace the connections carefully mapped out by the poet. For example, the penultimate line of the epic contains a verbal reminiscence of the first appearance of Aeneas in the poem; likewise the description of Aeneas' vain attempt to embrace the shade of his father echoes precisely his

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attempt to embrace the shade of his wife earlier in the poem. But Fitzgerald's English does not faithfully reproduce either repetition. Such sloppiness belies the meticulously conceived structure of the poem.

The Fitzgerald translation, then, is inappropriate for careful study of the *Aeneid* (a task for which one really should learn Latin). It is, however, probably the best choice available, both for first-time readers and for those who wish a fresh presentation of the poem. Fitzgerald does give us a sense of what Dryden meant when he said, in regard to one of his favorite lines "amongst a thousand others," that "For my part, I am lost in the admiration of it: I contemn the world when I think on it, and myself when I translate it." □

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STEPPING OVER: PERSONAL ENCOUNTERS WITH YOUNG EXTREMISTS

Malcolm McConnell/Reader's Digest Press/$17.50

Mark Falcoff

This book is about a quiet crisis in our civilization—the disaffection and dislocation of many of its young people. The phenomenon is worldwide, although apparently evident largely in Western countries, where a combination of abundance and freedom has produced precisely the opposite effects anticipated by social theorists a generation or two ago. The author of *Stepping Over,* a former Foreign Service officer and Peace Corps director in Mauritania, has circled the globe in search of exemplars. His travels took him, in sequence, to Indiana, Iran, Greece, California, Tulsa, Texas, Italy, back to California, Tennessee, and finally, to Washington, D.C. In each of these places he found a different story—a young cousin "burned out" by drugs; fanatical Islamic fundamentalists living only to overthrow the Shah; the self-indulgent radicals of the German Left; a follower of Jim Jones who perished with hundreds of others by drinking cyanide in backwoods Guyana; teenage runaways who sell their bodies on Santa Monica Boulevard in Los Angeles; a young man who murdered his mother while under the influence of drugs; Italian Maoists who have moved along the peripheries of urban guerrilla warfare; the quintessential Bay Area radical, an embittered veteran of Vietnam; and finally, a leader of the "new" Ku Klux Klan.

It would be comforting to report that these people are as exotic as their appellations make them sound; the truth, alas, is that most of them are easily recognizable, ordinary, even banal. This is particularly true of the Americans, who after all function in a society so jaded by sensation that by now nothing is capable of shocking it. Oddly enough, the most unusual and surely the most repugnant personalities to make an appearance—the Islamic radicals McConnell met in Iran—seem the most rational in terms of time and place: Unlike their Western counterparts, they, at least, have a clear idea of what they want, and by all accounts, are willing to pay for it.

Mark Falcoff is resident fellow at the American Enterprise Institute.

McConnell originally set for himself the task of finding some common threads to link his people beyond their ideological or national differences. In this he did not wholly succeed, but certain themes do habitually recur. In the United States it is drugs; in Western Europe, identity; in the non-Western world, the clash of traditional values with modernity, itself often a "foreign" import. The author tries to sort these phenomena out with the aid of clinical psychology, sometimes convincingly, sometimes not. The result is a rather discursive, uneven book, which shifts uneasily back and forth between pop-sociology and pop-psychology. In saying this I do not mean to trivialize it, for it is extraordinarily interesting and revealing, although in a very unsystematic way.

Perhaps the most important contribution McConnell makes is to liberate our analysis of social disaffection at least partially from the quasi-Marxist thralldom in which it has languished for the past half-century or so. Instead of holding up that all-purpose abstraction "society" to blame, McConnell focuses his analysis at the micro-level of personal relationships. Sometimes this works very well. For example, the Vietnam veteran turns out to be a young man perpetually in search of parental approval. It was only *after* he was discharged under less than honorable conditions from the Navy (for drug use and also trafficking) that—having been summarily rejected by his father—he assumed his present "radical" persona. Likewise, most of the teenage prostitutes McConnell interviewed in Los Angeles were latchkey children from broken homes, starved for affection and attention from older people.

But at times there is no direct relationship between family background and later marginality. Take McConnell's cousin Karen, permanently invalided out of the drug wars of the 1960s:

> She had a healthy, untroubled childhood. Her parents had seen that she was immunized against not only polio, but also against other threatening childhood ill-

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nesses. But . . . she had been swept up into a cyclonic culture, and dropped back eight years later, crippled in ways that no one could have foreseen when her parents had taken her to the pediatrician for her polio vaccination.

Even more troubling is the case of the late Maria Katsaris, who perished in the Peoples Temple holocaust. Most of what we learn about her comes from her still grieving father, a somewhat unconventional Greek Orthodox clergyman who represents all the qualities liberal critics of the family insist upon—warmth, tolerance, "openness," flexibility, empathy, etc. Even now Steve Katsaris—a thoroughly appealing human being in McConnell's description—cannot account for his daughter's fate. He is not merely mystified by the manner of her death, but the fact that for months before she would have no contact with her family, in spite of repeated efforts and a visit to Guyana by her brother. Or the matricidal Ronnie Love, who grew up in a family situation that could only be regarded as ideal—strong peer support on all sides and an abundance of role models.

After these somber excursions, it is almost a relief to happen upon Bill Church, a resentful redneck who is trying to revivify the Ku Klux Klan in Chattanooga. At least he seems to be in it for nothing more than status and a quick buck—would that all extremist behavior could be so easily explained!

Of particular interest, perhaps in some ways the centerpiece of the American sections of the book, is the case of a young couple who have overcome drug addiction through involvement in Pentecostal Christianity. They now live in Tulsa, where the husband is a machinist who hasn't missed a day of work in two years:

His future with the company was promising. They had money in the bank and were saving each month to make a down payment on a house. Before their conversion, such optimism, hard work, and stability would have been impossible.

But they had, to a great degree, opted out of the contemporary mainstream. Jackie stayed home, taking care of Billie (their daughter) and the neighbor kids. She wore no makeup or jewelry, did not cut her hair, and her somber dresses fell well below the knee. In all matters of importance, she deferred to her husband's decision. Their social life was concentrated on the weekly prayer services, their Bible study, and periodic revivals.

To McConnell, who describes himself as a "reconstructed Kennedy liberal," this provided a rather discomfiting picture:

They had, indeed, surrendered their patrimony of intellectual curiosity for a closed, fundamentalist belief system. But in so doing, they had freed themselves of a destructive affliction of fatal potentiality. Who was I to say that they had not chosen the better life?

The Europeans one meets in this book have other problems, although it is not easy to feel sorry for them. In Germany and Italy, the two countries represented, the economic recovery of the postwar period was so rapid (and in the case of Germany, so complete) that children who grew to adulthood in the 1960s and the 1970s can have no sense of continuity with their nations' past, and therefore suffer from a serious lack of historical perspective. As far as they are concerned, Nazism and Fascism might as well have occurred on Mars or Saturn; maybe some of them even think they originated in the United States. This obviously distorts their view of the present:

The young recruits to Italian terrorism were anxious to see their country in the worst possible light. They did not want to consider Italy in terms of the progress that it had made since World War II, but rather through a Utopian lens that measured how much social and economic improvement remained to be accomplished.

The Italians provide an additional twist to the story. After World War II reforms in higher education opened the

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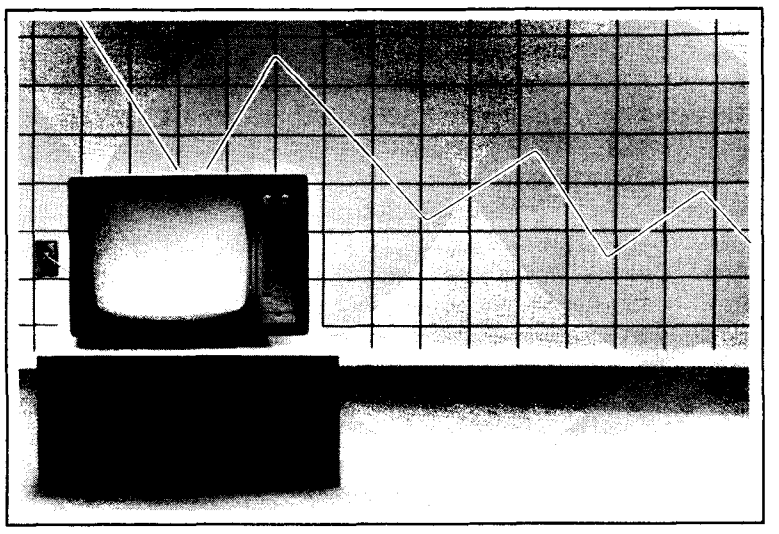

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universities of that country for the first time to children of the working class. Thousands of young men and women were prepared for jobs the likes of which their parents could never have dreamed, but the jobs themselves did not always materialize. During the 1970s many Italian cities were overflowing with young adults still living at home, waiting for the employment that would give them not merely economic independence but would validate their new identity. It was from this reserve army of unemployed intellectuals that the urban guerrilla and armed political action groups (including, it must be said, the neo-fascist MSI) drew their recruits.

Stepping Over is supposed to be a book about exceptions—people who have crossed the boundary between the ordinary and the pathological or the downright bizarre. But what one notes about McConnell's people is how in many ways they are merely grotesque archetypes from which more "mainstream" figures find their views, however watered down. For example, Duane, the Vietnam veteran, uses coarser language than does George McGovern or Gary Hart, but his "analysis" of our foreign policy traces roughly the same lines as theirs. Likewise, the teeny-bopper prostitutes of Santa Monica Boulevard simply present a more joyless version of the Playboy Philosophy. The truth is that we live in an unsettled age in which the most outrageous ideas are given a respectful hearing, and in ways that many of us probably do not realize, are becoming part of our larger frame of reference.

The other point about this book worth noting is that the decline of traditional institutions of social control—family, church, school—has been profoundly damaging not merely for societies but for individuals—perhaps, indeed, *particularly* for individuals. The entire theme of 1960s culture—"Do your own thing!"—rested on a simple premise: that constraints were fundamentally harmful to one's own well-being, and if, in the process of self-realization, society's interests were not met, well, that was society's problem. Not at all. The principal victims of the 1960s, it would appear, were not the Mrs. Grundys, but those who followed the Pied Piper; they lie scattered across the pages of this book—some maimed, some incapacitated, some dead. McConnell congratulates those young people who were not totally sucked in and destroyed, but he overlooks the degree to which these poisons are still in our system, and the length of time it will take us to work them out. ☐

THE PLOT TO KILL THE POPE
Paul B. Henze/Charles Scribner's Sons/$14.95

THE TIME OF THE ASSASSINS: ANATOMY OF AN INVESTIGATION
Claire Sterling/Holt, Rinehart and Winston/$14.95

Paul Seabury

The very idea that the Soviet leadership in 1981 ordered the assassination attempt on Pope John Paul II has been difficult for many to imagine, much less to believe. Yet evidence of such complicity continues to mount in the face of grim official silence in the West concerning the affair. This has not been the work of zealous investigative journalism alone; the arrest of several Bulgarian nationals in Rome on charges of complicity, and the flight of another, has the case now *sub judice* in the hands of an Italian judge. Other Bulgarians—secret service defectors to the West—have joined in accusations of Bulgarian complicity in the matter; and of those who know Bulgaria well, none would have us believe its government capable of disobeying Soviet orders. As its chieftain Todor Zhivkov once proudly remarked, Bulgaria keeps its "political watch-dial to the second with the watch of the Soviet Union."

We have now before us two American books which, taken in tandem, present the case for Soviet guilt in the plot: Paul B. Henze's *The Plot to Kill the Pope,* and Claire Sterling's *The Time of the Assassins*. Both books have come off the press at about the same time, and each is the product of more than two years' intensive sleuthing. Both are richly documented. The method of exposition of each work is idiosyncratic: Sterling's is that of a bold investigative reporter, Henze's more that of a seasoned intelligence analyst. Each approaches the mystery from a special point of departure. For years Sterling has been based in Rome. Her published work on terrorism in Italy (not just "Italian terrorism") has gained her widespread recognition for meticulously tracing the links among such groups as the Baader-Meinhof gang, the Brigade Rosso, the IRA, and the PLO. Henze's own professional and scholarly interests have focused largely on Turkish and Muslim politics. The two books thus complement each other. Sterling is at home in the Italian scene; Henze in failed assassin Mehmet Ali Agca's native land. Yet the authors are obviously competitors. Sterling, at least, seems anxious not to acknowledge her indebtedness to Henze's previous research on the topic (indeed, his name appears nowhere in her book, not even in a footnote, an omission the more obvious to connoisseurs since Henze now figures as a prominent malevolent figure in Soviet versions of The Case). Sterling also has the investigative journalist's penchant for heroic system-bucking, exposing bureaucratic stonewallers and sandbaggers who, she says, sought to block her access to necessary information (part of her book is devoted to lashing out at a most uncooperative U.S. officialdom both in the CIA and in the U.S. Mission in Rome).

Nevertheless, the two authors converge in their final judgment that (a) the Turk Agca was not a loner; (b) press reports to the contrary, he was neither a religiously inspired Muslim zealot nor a right-winger of any sort in his short career as a killer; (c) Agca, following his arranged escape from prison in Ankara, was trained, funded, and expedited across national frontiers and developed intimate ties with Bulgarian agents; (d) Agca's connections as a young professional killer while in Turkey were with extremists of right and left alike, and (e) it was precisely his publicized *rightist* connections which made him an ideal Soviet choice to accomplish his final task in Rome.

In such an intricately concocted plot as that against the life of this Polish Pope, common sense leads one to begin by asking: *cui bono*? Who benefits?

Various hypotheses can be ruled out. Agca himself had no prior personal reason—as a "loner"—to "get" the Pope, nor, for that matter, did the zealots of the Turkish Right. The Roman Church, even in Byzantium, played no role in Turkish politics. The number of native Turkish Roman Catholics today probably could con-

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gregate in a confessional booth; the Vatican in short has had no place in that nation's internal or external politics. In the Middle East, of which (for these purposes) Turkey may be considered a part, Muslim zealots easily could find Christian targets of greater local prominence on whom to vent their hatred—the Greek Orthodox, for instance, or perhaps Westernized Protestants residing in the country.

What other movement could directly benefit from the consummation of this act? The Bulgarians? But how in the world would even the loyal Soviet Bulgarian regime directly benefit from the murder of a Roman pontiff? The Vatican's role in inner Bulgarian events is almost non-existent; the remnants of Christianity which that regime has allowed to survive its persecution are almost exclusively Eastern Orthodox.

One must then reject other piddling explanations proffered in the Soviet press shortly after the attempt, such as those that singled out the Mafia, or secret Italian masonic conspirators, or chauvinist Romans incensed at a *Polish* pontiff—which leaves us with *one* of the great superpowers.

In this regard, Sterling tells a quaint little story arising from a lunch hosted in her honor not long ago in Washington by the editor of the *New Republic*, Martin Peretz. Present at the luncheon were two of Peretz's editorial assistants, both fresh from State Department internships. The colloquy about The Case is worth reprinting here in full:

"What do you two think of the idea that the KGB plotted to kill the Pope?" Marty began.

"Ridiculous," they replied.

"Tell me," pursued Marty. "What do you think of the story that the CIA plotted to kill Castro?"

"Oh, that! Of course!"

"Why are you so ready to believe that the CIA would kill Castro but not that the KGB would kill the Pope?" Marty went on, intrigued.

"Because the CIA does things like that."

"And the KBG doesn't?"

"No, no. The Russians wouldn't do such things."

In this matter of superpower complicity, what one gains from reading these two books (and related materials) would truly intrigue a Sherlock Holmes. On the one hand, Henze and Sterling both take note of the studied silence maintained by U.S., West European, and Vatican authorities concerning any suggestion of Soviet complicity in the plot; on the other, the Soviets have displayed no such polite compunction in hurling blame at the U.S. and the CIA. This line of reasoning can be found in a third book which has come to my attention, fresh off Bulgaria's Sofia Press: *On the Wolf's Track*, by a Soviet author, Iona Andronov, of the Moscow *Literaturnaya Gazeta*.

What connoisseurs will find most astonishing is Andronov's conclusion: namely, that Paul Henze, author of *The Plot to Kill the Pope*, is the guilty party, having organized the plot personally on orders of the Reagan Administration. Henze should take scholarly affront that his name is consistently misspelled in this little book, but his identity is nonetheless unmistakable. According to the Soviet author, Henze engineered the whole affair working in the U.S. mission in Ankara with the extremist Turkish Gray Wolves. (During the time this complex plot matured, Henze was living in Washington, researching a history of Soviet minority nationalities.) But the clincher in Andronov's book turns out to be an American citizen in Wiesbaden, a member of what Andronov refers to as a "U.S. subversive organization" called "New Solidarity," who comes clean nevertheless to ascribe responsibility to the CIA and is "quoted" as follows:

"Do not be surprised! Remember a similar occasion when Kissinger was U.S. Secretary of State and was monitoring the activities of the CIA. It was he who sanctioned the murder by terrorists of the former Italian Prime Minister, Aldo Moro."[1]

Whatever its merits, Andronov's book is noteworthy for advancing a hypothesis of guilt at odds with previous Soviet disinformation about the Pope's American connection. Only weeks before the event in St. Peter's Square, John Paul II had been a target of widespread vilification in the Soviet provincial press—depicted as a "malicious, lowly, perfidious and backward toady of the American militarists." His elevation to the Papacy, according to Soviet sources then, had been engineered during the Carter White House by Zbigniew Brzezinski working through Cardinal Krol of Philadelphia, as a means of destabilizing Socialist Poland. Even after he was installed as Pope, the Soviet press continued to call him the "Archbishop of Krakow," and spread false innuendoes of his record of pro-Nazi collaboration. Andronov pays scant attention to the Pope's own Polish origins, yet it would seem odd that such an American asset in the Vatican, previously regarded by the Soviets as so priceless for U.S. militaristic purposes in Poland, Lithuania, and the Ukraine, would have been so casually eliminated by the Americans who had allegedly gained so much from his elevation. The principal American motivation to do away with the Pope, Andronov finally concludes, was to break the unity of the peace movement and to turn Catholics against Communists.

Such crude allegations aside, the Soviets of course had every reason to want to rid themselves of this vexing priest in 1981. As both Henze and Sterling remind us, the attempt on the Pope's life took place months before the December 1981 Jaruzelski crackdown, at a time of great uncertainty as to the outcome of the Polish crisis. Solidarity was then at the height of its

[1]The authority for these allegations, as apparent spokesman for "New Solidarity," appears to be a member of Lyndon LaRouche's peculiar, New York-based left-wing/right-wing organization.

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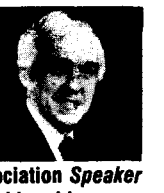

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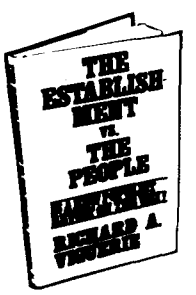

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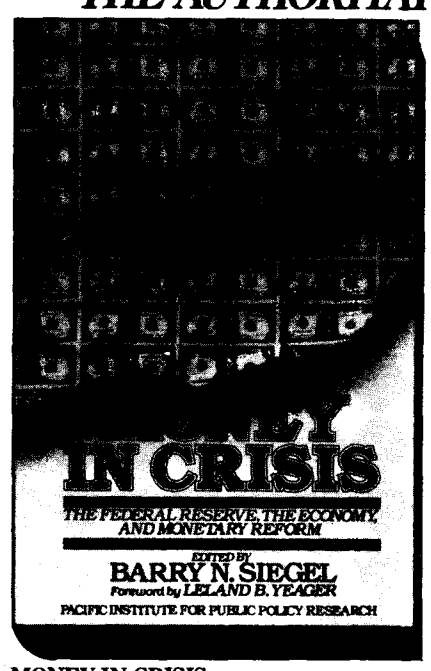
powers. Equally important was the Pope's dramatic appeal to East European Catholics. As John Paul said in his 1979 visit to Poland: "Is it not the intention of the Holy Spirit that this Polish Pope, this Slav, should at this moment of history manifest the spiritual unity of Christian Europe?" The Pope went even so far, during this visit, as to challenge the legitimacy of the Warsaw Pact. The validity of alliances, he said, depended on "whether they led to more well-being and prosperity for member states." He also noted that "no country should ever develop at the cost of enslavement, conquest, outrage, exploitation, and death."

Also at issue here were the Pope's intentions at the time when Soviet forces were mobilizing to deal with a possible collapse of their puppet regime in 1981. Sterling, for instance, cites the assertion of NBC's Marvin Kalb that John Paul, in a handwritten letter to Brezhnev in August 1980, warned that if the Red Army moved against the Polish people he would "lay down the crown of St. Peter and return to his homeland to stand shoulder to shoulder with his people." On the one hand, a Vatican spokesman later denied that such a letter had then been sent. Yet apparently there really was a message from Rome to Moscow not unlike that which Kalb described. At one point the ailing Polish primate, Stefan Cardinal Wyszynski, referred explicitly to the "Holy Father's . . . letter to Brezhnev," having publicly stated in March 1981 that "Providence has placed in the Vatican a man who could be protector of Poland, and this he is. Providence knows what it is doing."

But no doubt so did the Soviets, and the odd thing is that our two authors, Sterling and Henze, for all the evidence, circumstantial and testimonial, they provide, refrain from asking the obvious: What do we do if we know *for sure*? □

THE AUTHORITATIVE NEW BOOKS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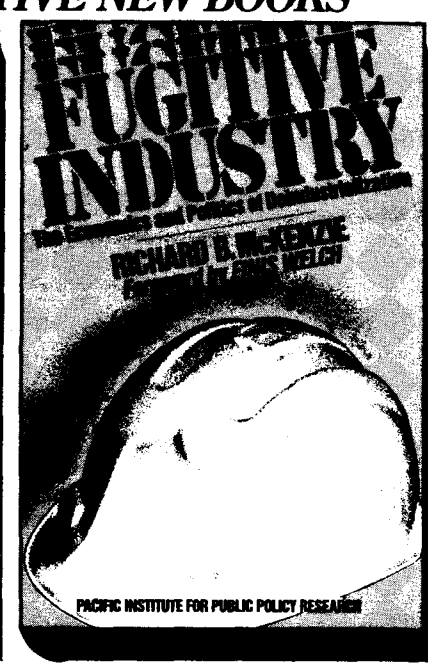

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THE PRESIDENCY OF LYNDON B. JOHNSON

Vaughn Davis Bornet/University Press of Kansas
$25.00; $14.95 paper

Alonzo L. Hamby

This first full scholarly study of an administration that tried to outdeal the New Deal has been produced by a former biographer of Herbert Hoover and a certifiable political conservative. Perhaps because he has already chronicled the trials of another embattled President, or simply because he takes the canons of objective scholarship seriously, Vaughn Davis Bornet has written the most comprehensive and evenhanded work on the LBJ presidency that we have. In large measure, he accepts Lyndon Johnson on his own terms, balances criticism with praise, and tends to treat the motivation of LBJ's critics as a problem of greater interest than the working of the presidential mind itself.

The result is a book that is frequently thought-provoking, if far from the last word and hardly for everyone. The sort of person whom the lit trade calls The General Reader will find it rambling and pedantic. Because the author's assignment was to do a comprehensive history of the Johnson presidency, he attempts to cover every significant aspect of LBJ's 1887 days in the White House; but he tells us little of the first 55 years of Johnson's life and never undertakes a serious exploration of the President's personality and character. Appearing to confuse objectivity with balance, he resorts to an "on the one hand . . . on the other hand" treatment, more often than not making his points by indirection.

Still, few will have doubts about Bornet's opinions on the two problems that loom largest in any evaluation of the Johnson Administration: Great Society social welfarism and the Vietnam war. On both counts his analysis is damning, all the more so for its bland impersonality.

Bornet's critique of the Great Society is at one with much of the conventional wisdom of the sane center these days: (1) Both the nature of poverty and the plan of attack on it were ill-defined. (2) Johnson engaged in utopian overpromises of absolutely equal opportunity. (3) Funding was "utterly inadequate." (4) Programs directed from Washington tended to be out of touch with local conditions. (5) A fair amount of such money as was thrown at the poor had a way of being intercepted by opportunistic activists, local politicians, and various interest groups. (Indeed, Bornet might have made more of the way in which the antipoverty programs served a welfare function for the various groups working in what Daniel Moynihan once characterized as "the resentment business"—welfare bureaucrats, planners, social scientists, and assorted do-gooders.)

What Mr. Bornet does not give us is a sure sense of whether the Great Society would have worked had it received sufficient funding. Or just how much additional funding would have been needed. Or whether the antipoverty infrastructure was capable of absorbing a greater infusion of cash. He clearly has his doubts. Beneath all the well-intentioned legislation, he comments, was the feeling that if the poor were given a bit more help and a chance at greater opportunity they would work hard to get ahead. In fact, as he gently puts it, "in twentieth-century America, motivation was not a universal characteristic." How then did one go about sorting out "the deserving poor," as the Victorians called them, from the non-motivated poor? Fairly enough perhaps, the author does not address that question.

Bornet leaves no doubt that he considers Vietnam a serious miscalculation. He is, however, overly partisan when he declares that Eisenhower had established no commitment to South Vietnam. The merest glance at the historical record demonstrates otherwise. But he is on firmer ground when he asserts what has become a standard conservative criticism: Kennedy was wrong to sanction the overthrow of Ngo Dinh Diem; the result was to destabilize further an already shaky ally. As to Johnson's own reasons for escalation, Bornet persuasively demonstrates that the President should

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Alonzo L. Hamby teaches American history at Ohio University. His forthcoming book, Liberalism and Its Challengers: FDR to Reagan, *includes an evaluation of Lyndon Johnson.*

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have known better but fails to explain why he moved ahead anyway.

Once LBJ made his commitment, he handled it about as badly as possible. Bornet is properly critical of the way in which Johnson, with the complicity of Barry Goldwater, made Vietnam an invisible issue during the 1964 campaign. He shows that time and again Johnson displayed a lack of candor with the American people. This criticism takes on increasing force as we learn more about the reality of the Vietnam conflict and strip away the "peoples war" myth that once dominated popular perceptions.

The bulk of the enemy in Vietnam, we now know, was the North Vietnamese army, not scattered groups of peasant guerrillas who swam like fish among the people. The only way to bring the war to a successful conclusion was to destroy North Vietnam's ability to conduct it. Yet the North was ruled by a totalitarian dictatorship determined to prevail at any cost and all but impervious to the limited air war directed against it. In short, the United States had to be willing to deal with North Vietnam as it dealt with Nazi Germany or with Japan before Hiroshima, that is, level the country to the ground, if need be, using conventional ordnance.

Johnson instead presided over an interminable "no-win war of attrition" fought by draftees in a far-away land for the benefit of an alien people. No democracy could sustain such an effort over the long haul. Johnson's motives in limiting the war, Bornet tells us, were good ones—he feared Chinese intervention and a wider conflict—but these were better reasons for avoiding a war in the first place than for waging one that the U.S was sure to lose.

Mr. Bornet does not discuss another important error. It appears certain that Johnson and those around him were guilty of a misperception about Asian politics that has bedeviled American diplomacy since World War II. They assumed that the North Vietnamese would rather build a nation than fight, that after a limited amount of American pressure Hanoi would come around to a compromise, enter into a coalition with the non-Communist Vietnamese, utilize American economic aid to construct a Mekong Valley Authority, and everyone would live happily ever after. Johnson and company assumed that at bottom the Vietnamese subscribed to the precepts of Western liberal democracy, or could be made to do so by force. The result was a fatally flawed policy that not only destroyed Johnson but did irreparable harm to this nation's conception of itself as a world power.

Ultimately, the most interesting questions about the Johnson Administration revolve around Johnson himself. Here was a great, rough-hewn, larger-than-life personality who desperately wanted to win the trust and love of the American people, failed miserably, and found himself driven from the presidency in consequence. Johnson's failure was due in large measure, of course, to his ill-conceived policies, but Bornet senses that there was more to it. LBJ's fall is fascinating soap opera, but it also tells us much about contemporary American politics and society. The President was a victim to some extent of the Media Age but at least equally of demons he carried within himself. Bornet makes a stab at explaining the first circumstance but rather inexplicably shies away from the second.

The author believes that Johnson was hounded, even smeared, by the press, just as in his mind Herbert Hoover had been. He recites, with apparent approval, all of Johnson's complaints about the inbred hostility of a northeastern, highly educated press corps toward a Texas chief executive, but he barely touches on the underlying implications.

The press corps that covered Lyn-

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don Johnson epitomized as much as any group in American life what neoconservative thinkers have called the New Class, a large portion of which pop sociologists recently have dubbed the Yumpies—younger upwardly mobile professionals, both self-obsessed and self-righteous, generally liberal and moralistic in their political preferences, cool and cosmopolitan in their self-images, geographically and culturally rootless, inclined to value style over substance whether in fashion or in politics, alienated from the traditional institutions of American life. The implications follow naturally: Repelled by LBJ's cowboy crudities, displaying the herd instinct that governs so much media behavior, the press became Johnson's adversary and contributed mightily to his downfall.

There is some truth to the argument, but to assume that the media turned against Lyndon Johnson simply because he was from Texas or because he preferred barbeque to tournedos rossini is to seize upon a piece of the story so small that one is reminded of the fable of the blind man attempting to describe an elephant after feeling only the end of its tail.

The press was with Lyndon Johnson through 1964. It was friendly to the Great Society. Moreover, it felt no great adversary duty when he took office. (There always had been spats between Presidents and the reporters who covered them, but these tended to be unpleasant episodes in a normally friendly symbiotic relationship.) It has been amply demonstrated that reporters assigned to Vietnam generally failed to comprehend the nature of the war and of Asian society, but they also were put off by the transparent mendacity that characterized one Saigon press briefing after another. Johnson was a victim less of media bias than of his own worst traits.

Throughout his political career, Lyndon Johnson was torn between two conflicting impulses—the urge to dominate everything and everyone around him, and the need to be loved by all who surrounded him. He never quite understood how one could get in the way of the other. A big, physically intimidating man, he was, to put it bluntly, a bully who cuffed around and humiliated those subject to his power. Those in his entourage whom he could not cow, primarily the reporters who covered him, he harassed in various petty ways.

Determined to display his power, he conducted himself with a vulgarity that could scarcely be excused by his Texas origins. He seemed to assume that naked emperors were always clothed. He ordered the seats on the presidential plane reversed to face his compartment, refused to be photographed next to anyone taller, and thought nothing of having a valet kneel and wash his feet or a nurse administer an enema as he conducted business. He employed profanity freely, was addicted to scatological humor, and displayed a near-obsession with the sexual behavior of animals.

The press actually kept most of Johnson's gaucheries off the record. It was the President who let photographers snap him as he lifted his shirt to show his latest surgical scar to the world and as he pulled a pet beagle into the air by its ears. And a few stories—the frequent skinny-dipping in the White House pool, the 90-mile-an-hour drives fueled by Pearl beer—inevitably got out. Bornet writes little of Johnson's style and image, arguing that it is tasteless to reprint presidential profanity and that "official actions and consequences are what make a presidency meaningful."

Perhaps it was thus in the days of McKinley, but no longer in the age of the Tube. Personally offended by Johnson and increasingly disturbed by the Vietnam war, the press no doubt compounded his difficulties. But the American people as a whole had an op-

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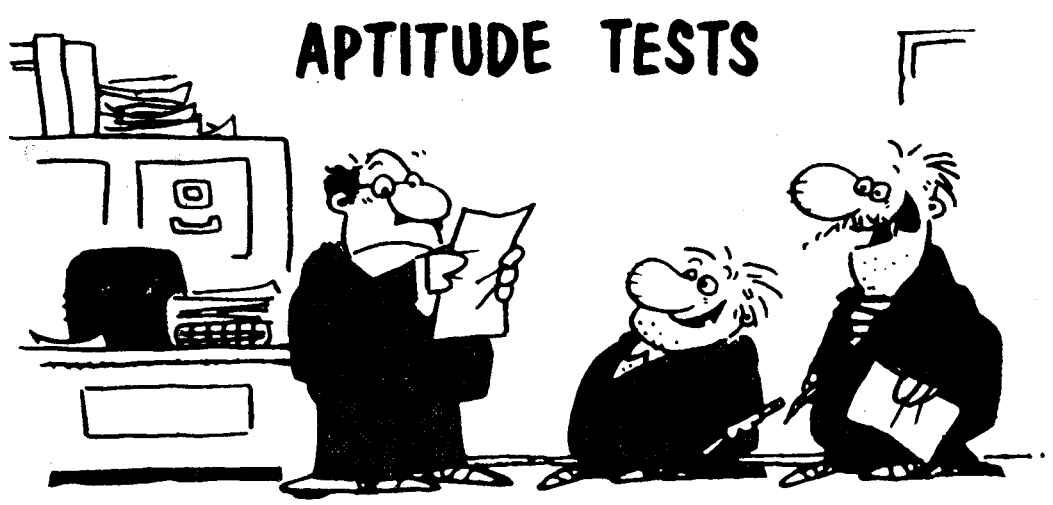
Is it any wonder Johnny can't read, or that alcoholism and drug abuse have become the favored extracurricular activities?

If, as they say, a nation's future rests on the education of its young, then the American way of life may be about to collapse. No sworn enemy could have devised a more sinister plot.

One is sadly reminded of the immortal words of Pogo, the familiar comic strip character of the 50's, who said, "We has met the enemy, and it is us!"



"ERNIE WENT TO A SCHOOL WHERE AN EDUCATION WAS OPTIONAL."

FRANK & ERNEST by THAVES
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portunity to evaluate Lyndon Johnson first hand through the relatively unfiltered medium of television. What they saw damaged their President more than what was written or said about him.

Lyndon Johnson sought to fulfill his need for affection by distributing gifts to those in his personal orbit, entitlements to the American people, and TVAs on the Mekong to the Vietnamese. He managed to win the love of Jack Valenti and a few other loyalists; no doubt he received the gratitude of some of the poor to whom he had given money or new opportunities. But the strategy could not override a growing perception that the President of the Republic and the titular leader of the free world was a peculiarly repellent individual.

There is a story that Johnson, in conference with that formidable *éminence* of the Democratic party, Dean Acheson, asked in frustration and self-pity, "Why don't the American people like me?" Acheson's response was characteristically blunt: "Mr. President, you are not a very likeable man."

Dean Acheson's comment encompassed a huge mound of neuroses and personality difficulties that were responsible as much as anything else for the failure of the Johnson presidency—in areas of substantive policy as well as in media imagery. One wishes Bornet had done more to try to explain them to us. All the same, he has produced a work that no one with a serious interest in this critical administration can afford to ignore. □

THE ISLAND OF CRIMEA
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Stephen Miller

The best-known novels about totalitarianism are somber and earnest—Orwell's *1984,* Koestler's *Darkness at Noon,* Solzhenitsyn's *The First Circle,* Pasternak's *Doctor Zhivago*—but there are some brilliant comic novels about Marxist-Leninist dystopias that deserve to be better known: Bulgakov's *The Master and Margarita,* Sinyavsky's *The Makepiece Experiment,* Nabokov's *Pale Fire,* and—more recently—Kundera's *The Book of Laughter and Forgetting.* The humor in these novels is not Wodehousean, but dark, very dark. These are not comedies of manners but what we might call works of "fantastic realism"—a phrase coined by Sinyavsky.

Writing under the pseudonym of Abram Tertz, Sinyavsky in a 1959 essay described the kind of fiction he hoped for. "Right now," he said, "I put my hope in a phantasmagoric art, with hypotheses instead of a Purpose, an art in which the grotesque will replace realistic descriptions of ordinary life. Such an art would correspond to the spirit of our time." In calling for an art rooted in fantasy, Sinyavsky was not only rejecting the official aesthetic dogma of the Soviet Union (socialist realism) but also suggesting that traditional realism—the realism, say, of *War and Peace*—was inadequate to the job at hand. To be a faithful chronicler of life under Communism, one had to employ the fantastic and the grotesque.

Since fantastic realism doesn't gladden the hearts of cultural commissars, most Russian and East European writers who work in this vein have been expelled from their native lands—a better fate than that of their literary forebears who disappeared or were hauled off to the Gulag. Sinyavsky and Kundera are in the West. So is Jiri Grusa, the Czech author who wrote *The Questionnaire,* a work of fantastic realism about a young man's coming of age and a Czech town's difficulties with the savage god of modern history, who brought first the Nazis and then the Communists. The most recent fantastic realist to land in the West is the Russian writer, Georgi Vladimov, the author of *Faithful Ruslan,* a grotesque fable, brilliantly rendered, that looks at life in the Gulag from the point of view of a Soviet guard dog.

It may be somewhat misleading to label all these writers fantastic realists. They aren't a school of writers, a literary clique, but a disparate group all of whom have departed from traditional realism for a comic blend of the fantastic and the grotesque. *The Island of Crimea,* a novel by the recent Russian émigré, Vassily Aksyonov, is very much a work of fantastic realism, but it differs from the others in one regard: It is as much about the democratic capitalist West as about the totalitarian Communist East. Aksyonov, the son of Eugenia Ginzburg (the author of a compelling memoir about life in the Gulag, *Journey into the Whirlwind),* was a successful Soviet novelist and screenwriter who spent some time in the West, teaching at UCLA in 1975. In 1980 he ran afoul of Soviet authorities for publishing a work abroad (*The Burn,* which will be published in English later this year), and was forced to emigrate.

The Island of Crimea is based on the following premise: What if Crimea

Stephen Miller is executive assistant to the Board of Radio Free Europe and author of Special Interest Groups in American Politics *(Transaction Books).*

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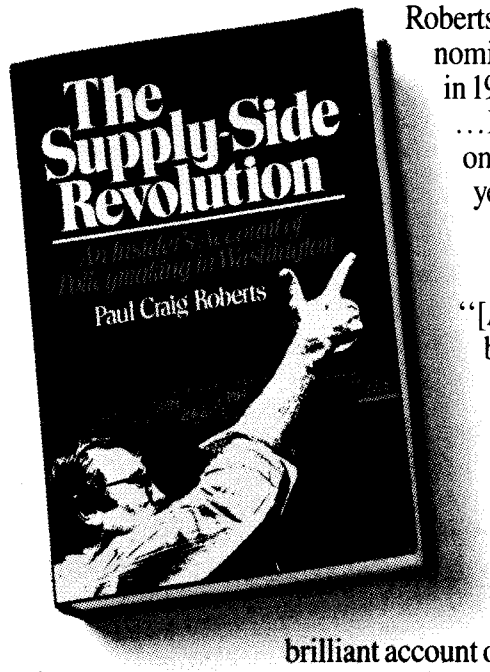

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were not a peninsula but an island—a democratic capitalist island, a kind of Hong Kong on the flanks of the Soviet Union? Geographical realities notwithstanding, the premise has an air of plausibility. General Wrangel, the head of the White army during the 1918-1921 Civil War, tried to create an independent anti-Bolshevik state in the Crimea, but he was defeated by Bolshevik forces and the Crimea again incorporated into the Soviet Union.

Aksyonov's novel is in some respects conventional. It has all the elements of best-selling international thrillers: sex, heavy drinking, violence, suspense. But beyond the titillating plot, one finds a novel of ideas—a dark, intellectual comedy that explores the dreariness of life in the Soviet Union and, above all, the weaknesses of the West, as symbolized by the fantasy state of Crimea. Though Aksyonov has some scathing things to say about the Soviet Union, his main concern is the dark side of the West—not that the West is oppressive, but that it is spinning out of control, bent on a self-destructive course.

The weaknesses of democratic capitalism are embodied in the novel's central character, Andrei Luchnikov. A successful newspaper magnate, he has everything money and influence can buy, yet he yearns for something more—a cause. And so he founds a movement called "The Idea of a Common Fate," whose goal is to reunite all Russians by having the island of Crimea merge with the Soviet Union. Luchnikov is not in love with Communism. He is in love with the idea of community. He has gotten as far as he can go on the engine of self-interest; now he wants blindly, willfully to pursue the path of disinterest. What could be more exalted than to sacrifice himself on the altar of this Cause, since he knows full well that merger with the Soviet Union will mean the loss of all his wealth and influence?

Luchnikov is not a credible character. We can understand his boredom, restlessness, and self-contempt, but not that they should cause him to play the colossal fool. The other characters are no more convincing. What carries the novel is the novelist's own narrative voice—e.g., his mordant observations about the political landscape of Crimea, which is littered with groups espousing crackpot causes, or about daily existence in the Soviet Union, where it is a "universally accepted fact of life . . . not to notice the obvious." A central irony informs the book: In the West Luchnikov and his affluent friends are bored with material possessions and preoccupied with ideas. In the East most people have no time for ideas; they are preoccupied with getting their hands on Western products. At one point Luchnikov makes a lengthy list of things he should bring his Soviet friends on one of his periodic trips north—including pantyhose and "a salami or two to help someone through the latest shortage."

Describing the confusions of life in the West and the frustrations of life in the East, Aksyonov is often very funny, yet he clearly worries about the ability of the West to withstand Soviet expansionism. Whether in pursuit of pleasure or of crazy ideas, Aksyonov's affluent Crimeans don't appreciate their freedom. Only one character does, and he turns out to be a Soviet official—the Central Committee's expert on Crimea. Is Aksyonov implying that only those who have not known freedom—or have lost freedom—truly know its value?

Sergei Dovlatov's comic novel, *The Compromise,* is less ambitious and less fantastic than Aksyonov's, although definitely grotesque. Dovlatov was a journalist in Estonia who incurred the wrath of the KGB for associating with Estonian and Russian dissidents. After a period of severe harassment, he emigrated to the United States in 1978.

The Compromise is less a novel than a collection of short stories, all clearly based on Dovlatov's experience as a Soviet journalist. Of the many disagreeable professions in the Soviet Union, his was surely one of the worst. The Soviet journalist cannot escape the brute fact that he is simply a hack, not a reporter of news but a parroter of the official line. Dovlatov's title is in fact misleading, for these stories reveal that Soviet journalists never enjoy the luxury of some middle ground between truth-telling and party ideology; they are forced to lie all the time. Every one of the stories begins with an epigraph consisting of an official item from the Soviet press. The story itself is what really happened—the inside story, as it were, of the official story.

Some of these tales are slight, and most suffer from too many descriptions of people drinking, a practice many Soviet journalists no doubt find more enjoyable than a feeling of self-contempt. There are funny moments, however, in all the stories, two of which—"The Fifth Compromise" and "The Eighth Compromise"—are outstanding. The first is about the main character's difficulties in finding a suitable newborn baby to celebrate as the 400,000th citizen of Tallinn, the second about how he is required to participate in—not merely report on—the burial ceremony of a Party official.

The situations and dialogue of many of these stories bring to mind the early Waugh; it is as if the journalist from *Scoop* had gone to the Soviet Union instead of Ethiopia. But they differ from Waugh's fiction in one respect; they are more salted with bitterness than irreverence, the bitterness of someone who has to write nonsense to make a living. As Dovlatov's hero remarks: "Don't you have the feeling that all this is happening to someone else? That it's not you and not me? That it's some kind of idiotic play and we're just spectators?" Like Sinyavsky and Aksyonov, Dovlatov is continually amazed by the absurdity of Soviet life. As Luchnikov says of a character in *The Island of Crimea:* "Every time Soviet reality surpassed his parodic fantasies he felt a bit inadequate. No matter how hard he tried, he seemed unable to get to the bottom of it."

The notion that reality surpasses one's parodic fantasies is an article of faith not only among East European fantastic realists, but among fantastic realists the world over. Some of these writers, particularly the South Americans, are preoccupied with what the United States hath wrought in the world, either directly or indirectly. Others, especially well-known North Americans such as Barthelme, Heller, and Pynchon, imply that all modern life is mad, that all advanced industrial societies are nightmarish places ruled by power-hungry technocrats.

The East European fantastic realists implicitly disagree with their American counterparts. In all their writing and stories, one thing is clear: freedom matters. Without it one is stifled, forced to make impossible choices—between a foolhardy honesty, which gets you into trouble, or toeing the of-

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ficial line, which leads to self-contempt. As Dovlatov himself said at a recent conference of émigré writers: "I still have many problems, individual and professional, yet for the first time in my life, I am happy. And I know only too well to whom I should be thankful, because the sole aim of my emigration was freedom. I would like to finish all my speeches in America with this wonderful word."

What will happen to these émigré writers—out of touch with their own country and, as many of them admit, not quite in touch with their adopted country? As Sinyavsky said at the same conference: "Probably many of us—I have in mind recent emigrants—have a perceptual experience of the West that is very diverse, vivid, even exceptional in its acuteness, while at the same time it is quite confused, impressionistic, and not quite thought out." Perhaps many will continue Aksyonov's experiment in *The Island of Crimea,* turning their acute if confused impressions to good account by writing works of fantastic realism that describe the way we live now in the West. □

THE COLLECTED STORIES OF COLETTE
Edited, and with an introduction, by Robert Phelps
Farrar Straus Giroux/$19.95

Victoria Sackett

Colette was a scandal. She married too often, and for six or so years after her first marriage ended spent her time rather conspicuously in the company of Paris's most aristocratic lesbians. She displayed too much of her flesh on the music hall stage and too much of her sensual soul in print. She displeased many, but was beloved and revered by more. In the end, Colette was honored by her countrymen (she was "Grand Officier de la Legion d'honneur" and president of the Academie Goncourt) and paid tribute by her country (she was the first woman in France to be given a state funeral). Colette was a woman who did what she wanted, and got away with it.

Biographer Yvonne Mitchell said in 1975 that Colette was "perhaps the most truly liberated woman of this century." The statement is in a sense absurd. Liberated? Colette? This is the woman who performed *without her clothes on,* long before Broadway made that gesture a political statement. For years she submitted to the philandering whims of two husbands—going so far as to distract one husband's mistress while he entertained himself with another. She could write brutally about the effects of aging on women ("I saw you just as Alexis Trallard had seen you. My contemptuous eyes took in the slack breasts and the slipped shoulder straps of the crumpled chemise. And the leathery, furrowed neck, the red patches on the skin below the ears, the chin left to its own devices and long past hope . . . "). She belonged to no sisterhood, to no sympathetic alliance of the afflicted. "Women have no excuses," she said in one story. "They've given men every reason to run away, to cheat, to hate, to change. Ever since the world began, they've been inflicting men, behind the bed curtains, with a creature inferior to the one he desired. They rob him with effrontery nowadays, when reinforced hair and rigged corsets turn any ugly, saucy little woman into a 'striking little lady.' "

Despite all this, Colette was a liberated woman—or at least what a liberated woman should be. Mature, successful, happy, she sought to change no one, and did as she chose. Her accomplishments thrust her into public view—as did some of her private activities—but she was relentlessly unpolitical. Unlike so many who have tried so hard to achieve liberated status, Colette qualifies simply because she barely tried at all. She would not have understood the tense, self-conscious, sometimes bad-tempered seeking after freedom that the status connotes today. "Liberated?" she might have asked. "From what?" She never thought herself enslaved, even though at one point in her life she actually was.

Colette became a writer against her will, locked in a room for four hours a day by her first husband, Henry Gauthier-Villars ("Willy"), who forced her to record her Burgundian childhood. This turned into the charming, successful "Claudine" series of books, to which Willy signed his own name. Colette silently endured her husband's self-aggrandizing theft, wrote resignedly, and developed the habits and the talent that later brought her a reputation of her own. She did not reveal Willy's unsavory part in her literary beginnings until five years after his death (although she did manage to claim authorship before then).

Colette's experience under Willy's lock and key opened her eyes to the flimsiness of first observations—a preoccupation in her writing. Having found liberation in captivity, she had to admit that no condition, and no person, is what it appears, at least not for long. A child's compliant silence conceals the thoughts that take her "adventuring . . . along a road of risks and temptations"; a modish friend's determined efforts to be fashionable make her look like "a little maid"; a recipient of unrequited love is the unfortunate one ("I'm the victim . . . I envy everything he has, everything I can't have, since he's the one who's in love"). The objects of love are rarely what they seem to be, so that marriage becomes an unnatural state, preserved only by deceit. Indecency, libertinism, exhibitionism—these are the most illusory of all, the public faces worn by a more provincial private domesticity.

Robert Phelps's fine collection of one hundred Colette stories is replete with these themes. It is a glorious profusion of stories, ranging from delicious miniatures to a lengthy novelette, many of which appear in English for the first time. And through all of them runs the unruffled voice of their author's calm prose.

Colette writes most convincingly—with an unsettling omniscience—of love in marriage. On its unnaturalness, she evokes a parental dispute remembered from childhood in which her mother had stormed at Captain Colette, "I forbid you to speak to me that way: you're not even related to

Victoria Sackett is associate editor of Public Opinion.

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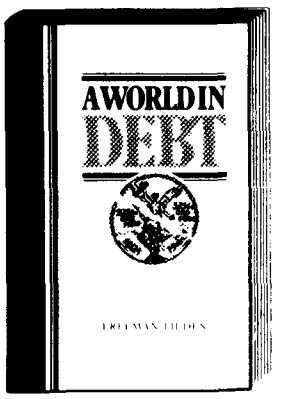

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me!" On its horrid secrets, she records the troubled thoughts of a woman anticipating her daughter's marriage:

> Madame Grey shuddered and stood up. She could see in her memory a young man in his shirttails, bare feet on a mosaic bathroom floor, standing in front of an absolutely astounded young woman; a young man in the midst of confessing, with horrible, unconscious candor, that he couldn't sleep if the fringes on the Turkish towels hung on the rack to dry were not lined up with each other . . .
>
> "But I can't tell Claudie that," thought Madame Grey agitatedly. . . . "I could never talk to her about towel fringe, or about the thumbnail going back and forth across his lip a hundred times . . . small, terrible things, the mold that grows on married life . . . "

So transitory is first love and its blessed blindness that Colette is able to write of a new wife's adoration turning to horror overnight. "Too happy to sleep," the bride lies awake and gazes fondly on her slumbering husband. His hand, contorted by a dream-inspired reflex, suddenly looks to her to be "vile, apelike." Her disgust proves far more substantial than the diaphanous adulation she had felt before. The following morning begins "her life of duplicity, of resignation, and of a lowly, delicate diplomacy." Repugnance, and the toil required to conceal it, replace permanently a much more effortless, much shorter-lived ardor.

How does a woman who sees everything changing at a moment's notice, who believes nothing is what it seems to be, find stability? Therein lies the key to Colette. In an erratic world, she had no one to depend upon but herself, the one person she knew and liked best. She took her refuge in being someone her critics failed to see. The Colette of the music hall—so bold and infamous—was in significant part a contented, conventional, domestic creature. Her haven was her "little ground-floor room" with its "scraps of salvaged furniture . . . books . . . [and] the smell of green leaves that sometimes drifted in from the Bois." Her favorite companion, of "good and bad moments," was a tabby cat. Colette saw in those who outraged society her same wholesome, homely virtues. The theater dressing room—peopled with the ill-bred, the wayward, and the disreputable—becomes during intermission a sewing circle:

> Off fly bicolored tights and Neapolitan skirts, to be replaced by spongy dressing gowns or cotton kimonos, mottled with the stains of cosmetics. Bare feet, unexpectedly bashful, groped under the makeup table for shapeless old slippers, while hands, pale or red, suddenly become cautious in unrolling lengths of linen and bits of imitation lace. . . .
>
> The five of them, now seated on their high rush stools, are busy and quiet, as if they had at last reached their goal at the end of the day. This half hour is theirs. And during this half hour they allow themselves, as a respite, the candid illusion of being cloistered young women who sew.
>
> They suddenly fall silent, pacified by some unknown spell. . . . In spite of their gaping wraps, of their high-pitched knees, of the insolent rouge still blossoming on their cheeks, they have the chaste attitude and bent backs of sedate seamstresses. And it is from the lips of little Garcin, naked in her beaded-net pants, that a childish little song, keeping time with her busy needle, involuntarily finds its way.

Colette could look unflinchingly at marriage, admit its nightmarishness, fail at it twice, and eventually find herself a perfect mate. She could endure her bad reputation, and enjoy the company of the disreputable, for she knew neither she nor they deserved censure. In bondage she had found freedom, and in life's uncertainty she found security. She appreciated the number of naturally occurring masquerades, and had no patience with deliberate hypocrisy. These are the marks of true maturity and self-assuredness, the things that make of a scandalous woman, a *grande dame*. □

SURVEY

Spring 1984 **Volume 28 no 1 (120)**

Andropov and Chernenko
Whither Big Brother?

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STENGEL: HIS LIFE AND TIMES
Robert W. Creamer/Simon and Schuster/$16.95

Ruppert Mundy

Whitey Herzog, who knows something about baseball and managing, once summed up Casey Stengel: "Casey was the best public relations man who ever lived. He knew exactly what he was doing all the time." Robert W. Creamer comes to much the same conclusion.

What Stengel was doing, of course, was adding to the American cast of characters. He invented The Baseball Manager. After this, he invented the New York Mets, an example, if there ever was one, of a man's reach exceeding his grasp.

There were other managers in the game longer, and there were managers of more illustrious teams, and there were managers with better winning percentages, but you never hear about them, and few people outside the game and its chroniclers recognize their names. None won more fame, or did it with more gusto, than the old Case. It was not a bad way to spend a life.

In the 1974 biography, *Babe,* which was esteemed as the first adult biography of the slugger, Mr. Creamer said he wanted to "go beyond the gentle inaccuracies and omissions" of earlier accounts, and "present all the facts and myths, the statistical details and personal exuberance, the obvious and subtle things" behind the legend. In *Stengel* he does the same for Charles Dillon Stengel. Born in 1890 in Kansas City, Casey broke into the major leagues with the Brooklyn Dodgers in 1914, and had enough confidence in his own talent to renegotiate his contracts on a regular basis. His biggest break, "the most rewarding part of his life," according to Mr. Creamer, came in 1921 when he was traded to the famed New York Giants. He played harder, and hit better, .349 (as opposed to his career .284), for John McGraw than for anybody else, and won two games of the 1923 World Series with home runs. But what he learned while sitting on the bench more than outweighed whatever stats he garnered in the twilight of his career. "I learned more from McGraw than anybody," he once said. Indeed, he went on to tie McGraw's record ten pennants, and surpassed his three

Ruppert Mundy is a writer living in New York City.

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world titles. He also learned "that you not only have to have the players, you have to know how to handle them, to keep them motivated."

Finally, he learned something of the personal style of McGraw, who up until the 1950s was most people's idea of The Baseball Manager. McGraw courted the press and had "his writers," feeding them well with lines like "I think we can win it—if my brains hold out" and "Sportmanship and easygoing methods are all right, but it is the prospect of a hot fight that brings out the crowds."

Such was the apprenticeship of Casey Stengel. Although not particularly remarkable, it will be of inestimable value to those who only remember Stengel for his managerial and comic genius, as well as those who remember the ancient mariner when he mugged for the cameras and talked endlessly about his Metsies. The strange truth is that, even in his playing days, the old Case was widely perceived as, well, *old,* the Old Perfesser of legend. He knew what he was doing, the old one, and when his playing days were over he talked himself into several managerial jobs, notably with the Brooklyn Dodgers and Boston Braves.

He was practicing, of course, for the Big Moment. He once said, "There comes a time in every man's life, and I've had plenty of them." His biggest came in 1949, when he was named manager of the perennial powerhouse New York Yankees, a move which left the press, the public, and even the team dumbfounded.

Mr. Creamer writes, with more than a hint of melodrama, "Stengel had spent almost 40 years in baseball, and it was as though he had done nothing. He still had to prove himself. He was almost 59, an age when most men are looking forward to retirement, and he was taking the biggest challenge of his life." Over the next 12 years, the old man piloted the Yankees to ten American League pennants and seven World Series championships, and steered himself into what the more pompous commentators call the National Consciousness.

There were naysayers—there always are—who declared that anyone could have made those Yankee teams finish in the money. Author Creamer brushes such sore losers aside: "When Casey had the players to work with, as he had with the Yankees, he held them to a high level of performance for a dozen years. To keep a team playing that well for that long a time is more than luck."

But there was more to Casey's act. He had more style than most major league managers, and more press. "These fellas just can't write the box scores, you know," he once said, and proceeded to give them things to write about. He slid across a hotel lobby, demonstrating the finishing flourish he gave to one inside-the-park home run. He got involved in a brawl afield at age 66. He mimicked his own players. He blew kisses to booing crowds. He raged at umpires, roughed up his players, kicked photographers in the seat of the pants. Needless to say, the New York sportswriters, the largest such batch, ate it up, and made the out-of-town papers do so, too.

On top of it all, the old Case invented Stengelese. Robert Creamer provides numerous examples, and, where necessary, translates. This stream-of-consciousness free association confounded the press, and often the team. "We'd have clubhouse meetings that would last an hour, an hour and a half, and he'd talk the whole time," recalled shortstop Phil Rizzuto. He tossed off one-liners that among sportswriters passed for wisdom: "Well, I've made my mind up both ways," and "I always heard it couldn't be done, but sometimes it don't always work." His crowning achievement was his testimony before the Senate Subcommittee on Antitrust and Monopoly in July 1958, chaired by Sen. Estes Kefauver. The Baseball Manager laid it on good and thick, and the senators chortled and guffawed at the superior entertainment that was theirs right in the Caucus Room. "I had many years that I was not so successful as a ballplayer, as it is a game of skill. And then I was no doubt discharged by baseball, in which I had to go back to the minor leagues as a manager. I became a major-league manager in several cities and was discharged. We call it discharged because there is no question that I had to leave." And on and on he rambled, giving a history of baseball in the twentieth century in 45 minutes of Stengelese, without notes.

Robert Creamer, who has been a writer and editor of *Sports Illustrated* since it started in 1954, and who knows something about baseball and sportswriting, here places perhaps a bit too much emphasis on the meaning behind Stengelese, which was used for comic effect or to snow an audience, and too little on the vast power of the New York Sportswriters, who made the old Case everybody's idea of The Baseball Manager—with a great deal of help from Stengel. Only he, it might be said, knew what he was doing.

Thomas Carlyle, the English man of letters, who knew something about life and biography writing, said that a well-written life was almost as rare as a well-spent one. In *Stengel* we have both. Mr. Creamer, to his credit, eschews the dreadful and fraudulent memorial style used in so many sports biographies, and the result is an admirable and sympathetic book, one of the few sports books you can read in the open without feeling like a fool. □

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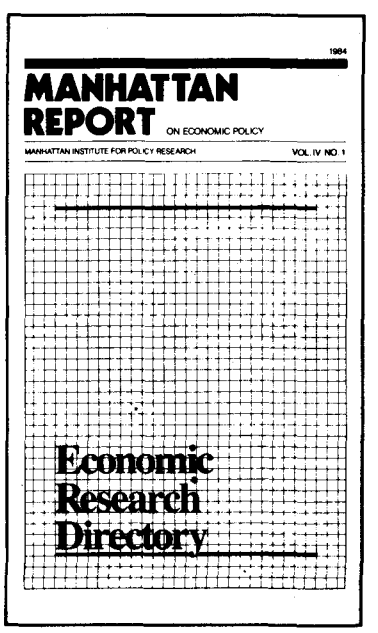

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GRENADA LIBRE

by Geoffrey Wagner

A couple of months after hostilities had ceased in Grenada two local lads were rounding up their goats near my grounds at Pointe Salines when they stumbled on some satchels hidden under dried-out bush. They reported their find to Airborne Intelligence, mindful that the Cubans had learned some savage tricks from their Russian masters who have lately been booby-trapping children's toys in Afghanistan.

Geoffrey Wagner is an Emeritus Professor of English CCNY who lives in retirement in Grenada.

A bomb disposal squad checked the valises out and found them kosher. In fact, they contained between four and five million genuine U.S. dollars—a figure and fact I verified with the Airborne Intelligence colonel in charge (519th MI BN)—plus fifteen Cuban passports. The boys got a bounty of U.S. three grand each and the money was put into custody with the other fortunes found on or about the absconding leaders of the New Jewel Movement (NJM) and their Revolutionary Military Council (RMC). Phyllis Coard, for instance, Jamaican wife of the former Deputy Prime Minister, was divested in Richmond Hill Prison of a corselet containing half a million U.S. dollars, though this I didn't personally verify.

The sheer loot lifted—either from the island's exchequer or Cuban drug money or both—seems to me an important aspect of any analysis of what might now be called the Old Jewel, though no identification of it is included in the excellent USIS *Grenada: A Preliminary Report,* currently running in the *Grenadian Voice* under "Anatomy of a gruesome period in our history." Frankly, all of us here—white-collar, blue-collar, no-collar—knew of the arms build-up. I jogged almost daily past a warehouse wall-to-wall in RPGs (Soviet Rocket-Propelled Grenades), and to be told that "in proportion to population, this could have given Grenada one of the largest military forces of any country in the world" is merely to add so many zeroes to an already unassimilable figure.

The first concern of locals was to locate the missing (my maid lost a father and son); this was an impossible task since during the curfew RMC chopped up, burnt, and then deposited in the sea the bodies of those they had murdered. Indeed, it was partly for such purposes they instituted the curfew. The second local concern was revenge against Bernard Coard and his minions; I forged through a tumultuous crowd throwing rocks and screaming for his blood outside the St. George's courtroom where he and ten others were escorted for arraignment. There is a strong rumor that fellow-prisoners tried to dry-drown Coard in the prison courtyard (Goat's Pen locally) with a live fire hose. Thirdly, local interest in the USIS documents has been high because of the hit lists of communities compiled by the faithful over four years. Some sleepy village of a handful of inhabitants is thus seen divided into Economic Objectives, Military Objectives, Enemy Forces, Our Forces. Economic Objectives might comprise some small rum shop or bar owned by someone rude when you didn't pay your bill, or possibly a one-pump gas station ("bowser"), while Enemy Forces would be enumerated, all three of them in some instances, as "Petty Bourg—Dangerous." Spelling didn't matter. In the USIS publications it is "corrected throughout to facilitate reading." But then Jewel's contempt for grammar is also part of the affair.

The USIS Grenada papers cite the articles of power. The minutes of the NJM Central Committee, found in a document bonanza in the DGI house abandoned near my own, are a frantic effort to define what that power was for: ostensibly, destruction of "the corbeau of imperialism" and its "eater of babies" Ronald Reagan (as so named in the last issue of the *New Jewel*) and the installation of hard-core Communism together with, hopefully, "inner party democracy."

Here one must draw pause before the tergiversations of the inner party or CC, the bloodshed boys ("We have to be coldblooded and cast all emotions aside . . . The situation demands Bolshevik staunchness"). No one had spoken this language before in the ex-British Caribbean, at least not while in power, and *in the six days before Maurice Bishop's death the inner party spent fifty-four hours deliberating semantics!* No wonder the Cuban DGI readers added contemptuous marginalia like *infantilismo* to their copy of the minutes. For the obfuscations achieved at times a kind of genius. No matter that Comrade Einstein T. Louison (real name) comes back from Russia's Vystrel Military Academy after six months, he is still "suspended and confined for his opposition and petty bourgeois behavior." Jewel self-parodied its "revo" again and again, until it ended in madness. Subconsciously they did not want to be understood, even by themselves.

They did not want to be understood because they barely comprehended the politics they espoused. They wore Leninism like a lapel badge, none having read the master in depth, and called anyone in their way, even their former leaders, Petty Bourg. In short, they were a South Bronx street gang trying to dress up in an abstract rhetoric way beyond them, one which today most adult Grenadians slip their eyes over with a shrug (where are the cricket scores?). Note that almost without ex-

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ception every member of the inner party had some handle or nickname, in common with the graffiti artists of New York's IRT.

If the eyes of the Grenadians glaze over the CC deliberations, it is because they know what Jewel wanted power for. Power for the people, which is to say *us*. Let us not mince matters: Bishop began life as a pimp in London, and ended it as a pimp, selling his country off rather than Grenadian girls in Shepherd Market. The errand of the affair was simply those satchels, stuffed with imperialist greenbacks.

Take the handles. It is true that male Grenadians have nicknames. Many conclude in the suffix *-man*. I still find it awkward to address my cheerful car mechanic by his preferred moniker Blackman. Recently working for me were burly youths called Margaret, Snail, Sarge, and Madman. Calypsonians have always traded in such nomenclature. A People's Revolutionary Army Captain who called himself Flying Turkey wrote calypsos for children to sing in school. One concluded:

Let them come, let them come,
We will bury them in the sea.

Another Marxist hothead, who "captured" Union Island from St. Vincent in 1980, referred to himself publicly as Bumper. Even so, the one thing that struck 82nd Airborne's interrogation team was that their prisoners always advanced nicknames *first*. They wished to be known by their handles. Thus Leon Cornwall was *Bogo,* Randolph Callender *Baboo,* Fitzroy Williams *Mashie,* and so on. There was even one leading light whose handle was *Stalin,* while Bishop was always *Bro*. The letters of CC member Vincent Noel are also being published in our *Voice*. One deals with his confrontation with a power rival Chalkie Ventour: "I asked him how things were going at the level of the CC as things were beginning to get rough on the ground. I mentioned the rumors. Chalkie said, 'What rumors that? Is the chief that starts that shit.'" Chalkie then told Vince that "Maurice was a psychopath," to which Vince returned, "I told Chalkie that he was mad." He was. So was Vince. He's also dead.

To my mind the language of the Grenadian revolution shows an Orwellian evasion of reality. The handle was a persona. In other words, when the rhetoric becomes so venal you have to amputate part of your mind to say it, then you assume an *alter ego*. You don't send an Ambassador to Cuba, you send *Bogo*. Subconsciously Jewel constructed, and partially inherited, a rhetoric that was an impediment to understanding. This hoisted them on their own semantic petard. They did not want to be understood. For if they were they might be found out. All those satchels of money, man. □

CORRESPONDENCE

(continued from page 7)

the right, who find the film too tolerant of its characters' remnants of sixties mentality. And not to *Newsweek*'s crusty critic from the left, who finds the film too tolerant of its characters' departures from said mentality!

Well then, does *Chill* succeed in being anything besides witty and charming? I think it does. *The Big Chill* brings to vivid life an assortment of people who have half grown out of their sixties illusions. That's not a bad metaphor for the USA in 1984. It is probably true that we are running out of growing-up time, but we aren't going to get that message from Hollywood (from which vantage point the only imminent dangers are right-wing conspiracies and nuclear apocalypse). Thus it is (unfortunately) remarkable even that *Chill* does not stack the deck against conservative values, although the Kramers think it does. That's where I disagree.

For instance, Harold, the most conservative of the principal characters, is also the most likeable. And it's hard not to notice that while not as glib as the others, he is the one most truly generous, the one most willing to take risks for others, and—let's face it—the one with the *resources* to help others. The Kramers think he's too much of a pussycat to be a tycoon, but at least a pussycat is a novel departure from the usual tycoon stereotype.

Nor is Sarah as mindless as the Kramers portray her. She does question Meg's fertility fantasy ("I don't think it's quite that simple . . .") but later is caught up in the camaraderie of the weekend—an accurate reflection of the film's ambivalence. And while she may not feel sufficiently guilty about her affair with Alex, she recognizes that the results were not what the sixties' worship of sexual "openness" had led her to expect.

Meg is unrealistic about child-rearing, but not about her low-income legal clients or about the joys of singlehood after the sexual revolution. (It *does* seem these people can only learn the hard way . . .)

Michael is a slick and opportunistic journalist, but does any movie viewer out there think he was anything but a slick and opportunistic revolutionary? And for some folks, it may be the first time it's occurred to them that this is not a contradiction in terms.

Similarly, Sam and Karen are shallow now, and doubtless were shallow back when. (Karen's literary pretensions and Sam's altruistic pretensions are and were just that.) Karen's hypocrisy in exploiting the security her husband offers her (while she simultaneously ridicules it) also comes through loud and clear. Sam and Karen are rather obviously in love with their own images and each other's images (not with each other): Karen is in love with the image of a contemporary male sex symbol (providing escape from her "dull" husband); Sam is in love with the image of the unattainable goddess of his "idealistic" college years (providing escape from the crassness of his current life). Consequently their lovemaking begins in desperation and ends in disillusionment. If its utter lack of erotic appeal was unintended by the film's makers, they sure fooled a lot of us out here.

The Big Chill is gentle with its generation's fantasies, but it refrains from idolizing them and indeed frequently questions them. To expect more than this of Hollywood would be—fantasy.

—Patsy Summerside
Pierre, South Dakota

Yale and Rita Kramer reply:
We appreciate Patsy Summerside's thoughtful comments on the movie and our review. Our differences seem to be ones of degree, a matter of just how questioning *The Big Chill* really is of its characters' values. We find what questioning there is superficial and the answers pat. We do agree, though, that it may be unrealistic to expect much more of Hollywood.

To Daniel R. Kronemyer and K.M. Cosgrove, our thanks for their praise.

TAS Falls

Curse you! My huge stack of *American Spectators* has just fallen over. All because some time ago you decided to widen the paper by half an inch, so wider *American Spectators* must perch upon narrower ones. You have a foul sense of humor.

—Peter Samuel
Washington, D.C.

United Ireland

Despite the full and detailed coverage of the U.K. Irish issue in the correspondence columns of your February issue I wonder if I may add a few more words from this side of the Atlantic.

Most British people are conscious of our bad historical record as regards Ireland and recognize the many ethnic and emotional ties between Ireland and the USA, but the support of terrorism and illegal forces saddens and bemuses not only responsible parties in the U.K. but in the Republic also. In the same issue we were left in no doubt that support of the INLA and IRA was coming freely from Russia and Libya as was discussed at the Houston conference on world terrorism.

Mr. Greer understands and sets forth the issues admirably but I would be glad if you would permit me to add and reinforce two particular aspects.

Firstly Mr. Wall's reference to the Sinn Fein vote as 42 percent of the nationalist vote disguises the fact that they only won about 10 percent of the valid first preference votes cast in Northern Ireland, against 70 percent for parties standing for Northern Ireland continuing to be part of the U.K., and perhaps most important of all, nearly 90 percent for parties specifically rejecting the violence of the IRA which Sinn Fein supports.

Under the proportional representational system used in local and provincial elections in Northern Ireland the final results give a much better picture of the depths of a party's support than does the crude breakdown of first preference. Sinn Fein's electoral support in the Republic has consistently been even lower.

The Provisionals' regard for those democratically elected but with whom they disagree has been tragically demonstrated by the murders of a Member of Parliament and a Northern Ireland Assemblyman in the past two years. They have chosen to underline their wish for unity with their fellow countrymen by killing many hundreds of them over recent years including police from the Republic as well as the North.

Finally both Assistant Professor Swan and Mr. Farrell raise the canard that the United Kingdom is in some way determined to "hold" Northern Ireland regardless of the wishes of the people who live there. There is nothing more the people of the U.K. would like better than to leave Northern Ireland to its own devices, and if the majority there wish to leave the United Kingdom the British Government would not stand in their way and has repeatedly said so.

The obstacle to a United Ireland is not the British, nor indeed any other government, but in the 1980s, as in 1912 and 1920, the united opposition of a fifth of the whole Island, geographically concentrated in the North and with a clear local majority wholly committed to the preservation of the union.

For those on either side of the ocean who seek a United Ireland, the problem is to overcome that rejection.

Fourteen years of murder and atrocity have simply made it more bitter and resolute than ever.

—Sydney Shenton
Stockport, Cheshire
United Kingdom

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CURRENT WISDOM

The Daily Californian

Miss Venita Kelley explicates the sources of various gastrointestinal disorders in the student paper of the University of California-Berkeley:

What's it like to be a Black student at Cal? For me it is being angry—a constant state of anger that is channeled in many ways: school, the African Student Association, the Martin Luther King, Jr. Convocation Day Committee. Specifically, I am angry about not seeing more Blacks at Cal. I am angry with the idea that Blacks cannot make it at Cal because of "deprived educational backgrounds," which translates into a good excuse for the university's enrollment and retention of Black students. . . .

Having professors address you as an authority on any Black subject.

Capitalizing Black in an essay and getting it back substituted with small b's.

Having professors and TAs look you straight in the eye as they talk about the past injustices done to Blacks "and other minorities" so they can prove to you they understand what you've been through.

[February 8, 1983]

Ms.

A fledgling feminist reveals how a confusion over female orifices can lead to a similar confusion over male protuberances and many messy situations:

The daughter of a friend took her first bath with a male cousin when they were both four years old. Being well brought up, she was silent about her anatomical discovery, but that night, as her mother tucked her into bed, she said: "Mommy, isn't it a blessing he doesn't have it on his face?"

[March 1984]

Univ. of Mass. (Amherst) Collegian

One more moment in the limelight for the venerable Miss Phyllis Rodin, at large on the campus of UMass at Amherst:

At 70, future studies major Phyllis Rodin is one of the oldest students at the University of Massachusetts, but age can be deceiving. She is one of the most active people around.

"I do aerobics and yoga every day. I am in good shape," said Rodin, a feminist, psychotherapist, self-proclaimed planetary citizen and now a doctoral candidate at UMass.

"Very few people can keep up with me. I find people in their twenties are older than me. They are scared," she said.

Rodin's life in all 24 countries she has lived and worked in has always taken her in the direction of peace and progress on earth. While continuing those commitments, she has now turned to the future; the space age.

Her dissertation is called "Space Communities: Penal Colonies or Paradises," in which she examines the potential of future scenarios of life in space. . . .

As a feminist and a peace activist Rodin's actions have been endless. For a time in the 1940s she helped remove the psychosomatic effects of radiation of people living in Hiroshima, and in the 1970s, helped initiate programs and rallies to help women in the early days of the women's movement.

More recently, Rodin spent time at the Seneca Women's Peace Encampment, and was the oldest person to climb the fence of the Seneca Army Depot, which resulted in her arrest.

"I was not scared of that. What can happen to us that is worse than 'The Day After,' " she said.

Rodin is quite critical of President Ronald Reagan and the attiudes of people in power.

"If the Russians and the United States could get over the enmity and look towards the future we could have a millenium on Earth," she said.

"If they could only change their goals from killing people to helping people," she said.

"My favorite theory about what has happened is that these people who are driving us towards war are aliens who have taken on human bodies and are intent on destroying the human race. Like 'Star Trek,' " she said.

[December 15, 1983]

Time

An update on one of the intellectual giants of our time:

The invitation from Yuri Andropov to visit the Soviet Union last summer made her the nation's premiere pre-teen good-will ambassador. And last week Samantha Smith, 11, was on the road again, this time in Kobe, Japan, to address a children's symposium on the 21st century, sponsored by organizers of the technology and science fair Tsukuba Expo '85. . . .

In her opening message to a group of 56 children the next day, Smith, with the help of some speechwriting tips from her dad, painted an optimistic picture of the future, where computers "will transfer good food, good shelter and good clothing to the people who need them." The "Angel of Peace," as she is called by the Japanese press, also proposed an "international granddaughter exchange" to increase understanding in the world. "Then," said Smith, "the year 2001 can be the year when all of us can look around and see only friends—no opposite nations, no enemies and no bombs."

[January 9, 1984]

Village Voice

A plaintive epistle to the *Voice*'s famed Problem Lady from one of Gary Hart's Yuppies:

Dear Problem Lady:

What does it mean when a girl won't give you her phone number?

I am involved in the strangest relationship. I call none of the shots. This girl decides when we meet, where we go, what we do.

In a way, I'm relieved. There's something about this city that makes it impossible to decide where to go to dinner. I have been known to spend 45 minutes in earnest conversation on the subject. Shall we have Indian? How about Japanese? Well, then, what about that funny little French bistro on 23rd Street? You know what I mean. Ditto movies. Who ever knows what they want to see? Not me. Brooding French? Peruvian slapstick? Erotic Italian? Repellent Hollywood?

So if Janie (that's her name) says let's eat at Trattoria Da Alfredo and then go see Bunuel's *Wuthering Heights* I'm all for it.

But she's so secretive, or something. She always calls me from work, and only wants me to call her at work. She says she doesn't have a home phone, but I called information once and they said the number was unlisted. I don't understand why this woman is so obstreperous. Do you?

—Mark

Dear Mark:

Sure I do. Janie is two-timing you.

It's famous. Whenever one doesn't get a home phone number after a date or two, it's because there's someone at home who could answer the phone and start asking a lot of awkward questions.

Cross this Janie character off your list. She's too sneaky and conniving for you. Most men would not only have noticed what was going on, but have used it to their own advantage by now. You, I can tell, are a simple and trusting soul, not to be trampled on. And yet here you are with treadmarks on your head. Not nice.

—Problem Lady

[December 31, 1983]

The Journal Herald (Dayton, Ohio)

Lugubrious revelations from an American Catullus:

After John Lennon's murder, I never played *Double Fantasy* again. Certainly it was hard enough to escape the songs on the radio, but at home I never took the LP from its jacket. At the time, I found it odd that while others were taking solace in hearing his voice, I couldn't stand the thought of it.

[February 4, 1984]

National Public Radio Morning Show

A matutinal poem from the legendary June Jordan trapped in the fervors of National Black Awareness Week:

Don't you worry about a thing, Mr. President
and you too, Mr. Secretary of the State
relax
we not studying you guys
no, no, no, no
This ain't real
ain't nobody standing around
we not side by side
this ain't no major rally
we not holding hands again
we not some thousand varieties of one fist
this ain't no coalition
this ain't no spirit
no muscle
no body to stop the bullets
we not serious
no, no, no, no, no, no
and I ain't never heard about El Salvador
I ain't never seen the children sliced and slaughtered at the simple riverside
and I ain't never heard about Atlanta
I ain't never seen the children strangled in the woods
and I ain't never seen Marines, state troopers, or the po-lice out here killin' people
and I ain't never heard about no rage, no tears, no developing rebellion
I ain't never felt no love enough to fight what's hateful to my love
Oh, no, no, no
This is just a fantasy
we just kidding around
You watch.

[February 10, 1984]

Ms.

After a typically far-ranging intellectual inquiry Miss Susan Brownmiller brings it all back home:

Bending over to pick up a piece of paper was fraught with the danger of indecent exposure during the sixties miniskirt era, and like other women who believed minis looked terrifically dashing when we stepped along the street, I had to think twice, compose myself, and slither down with closed knees if I dropped something. A breed of voyeurs known as staircase watchers made their appearance during this interesting time. Slowly it dawned on me that much of feminine movement, the inhibited gestures, the locked knees, the nervous adjustments of the skirt, was a defensive maneuver against an immodest, vulgar display that feminine clothing flirted with in deliberate provocation. My feminine responsibility was to keep both aspects, the provocative and the chaste, in careful balance, even if it meant avoiding the beautifully designed open stairway in a certain Fifth Avenue bookshop.

But why did I think of vulgarity when the focal point at issue—I could no longer deny the obvious—was my very own crotch?

[March 1984]

The Journal Herald (Dayton, Ohio)

Reports continue to roll in on what really took place on the heroic evening when all America had a good cry over "The Day After":

There *were* phones at Channel 2 in Dayton Sunday night. But they hardly rang at all.

From 8 p.m., when the movie began, until 10:25, when it ended, Channel 2 personnel received 10 calls at the station.

Two of these came early in the show and were from viewers who felt there were too many commercials.

Three Channel 2 news executives—station manager Steve Fisher, news director Steve Olszyk and promotion director Pat Baldwin—were at the station Sunday night to handle the telephones.

All three said they expected more calls.

"I really think, instead of calling, people are just sitting in their living rooms talking and thinking about the show," said Baldwin, who was seeing it for the fifth time.

"The first time I saw it, I had tears in my eyes when it was over. I still find it extremely powerful."

[November 21, 1983]

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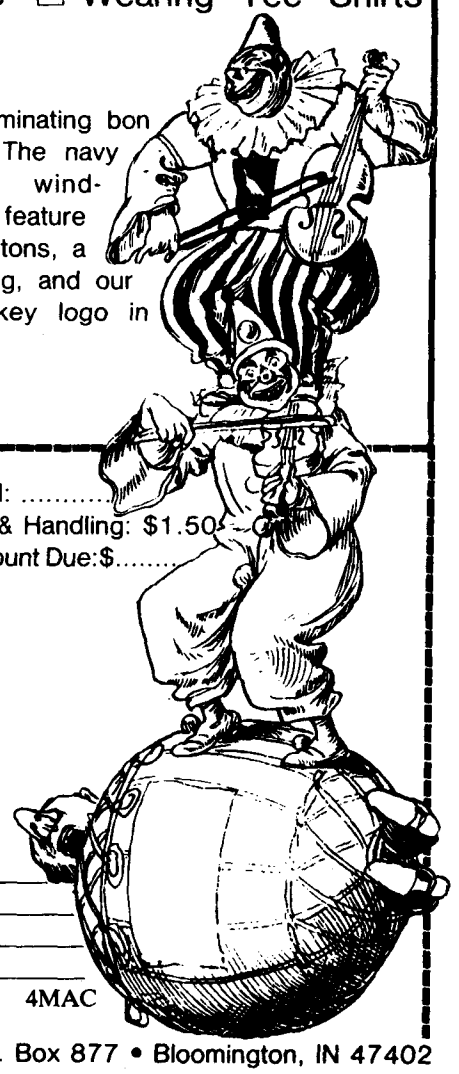

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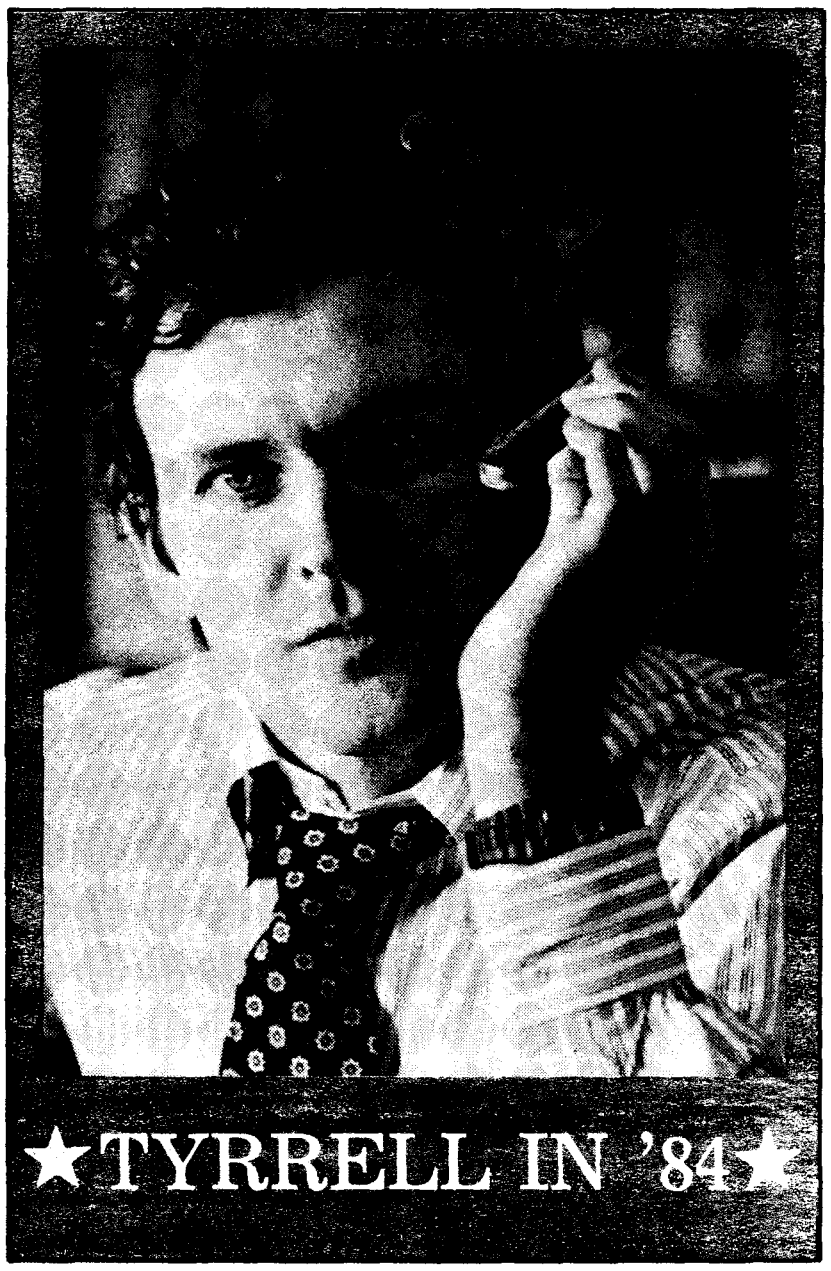

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